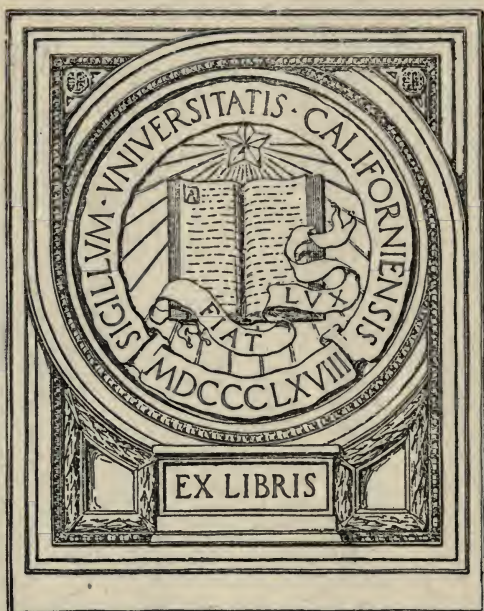
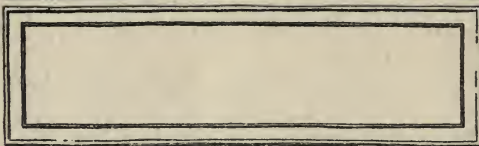


# OLD NAVAL DAYS



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WILLIAM RADFORD III

From a Miniature Painted Shortly After His Marriage, 1848

# OLD NAVAL DAYS

SKETCHES FROM THE LIFE OF  
REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM RADFORD, U.S.N.

BY HIS DAUGHTER  
SOPHIE RADFORD DE MEISSNER



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## PREFACE

In offering these pages to the public I should like to express my thanks to the U. S. Navy Department authorities for the facilities extended me for examining the logs and other records concerning the life and services of my father, Rear Admiral Wm. Radford; and I desire furthermore to acknowledge my indebtedness to the members of the Navy Department Library staff for their valuable assistance in this work.

S. R. DE MEISSNER.

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## A REMINISCENCE

PSYCHOLOGISTS might possibly affirm that the memory of an incident occurring at so early an age could not be retained in mind, but throughout my life has a picture been present to my inner consciousness, and, although I never questioned my father as to its accuracy—any more than would I have questioned him as to any other established certitude of our ordinary existence—I am just as positive that it happened as am I of any other event that ever took place in my life.

The “setting” was in our old home at Morristown, N. J.

In a high four-poster bed lay my mother surrounded by pillows, while in a chair on the far side of the room sat a nurse with a young baby in her arms. Leaning against the nurse’s knee, and gazing wonderingly at this small specimen of humanity, stood a wee mite of a girl not yet two years old—myself!

Then it happened!

Looking straight into my eyes the nurse with undesigned brutality exclaimed:

“Ah ha! *Your* nose is out of joint!”

The cryptic significance of this speech was naturally far beyond my comprehension, but in my infant mind was the foreshadowing of some dire calamity—perchance that of a literal fulfilment of the words—and raising my voice in a wail of despair I rushed frantically through the partly open door of the room, only to fall at full length across a basin filled with water that was set just outside. The wail at this became a frenzied roar, when my father, who had just reached the head of the stairs on the

opposite side of the great square hall, sprang forward and lifted me, all dripping, in his arms.

How I made him understand I know not, but, between heart-breaking sobs, I repeated as best I could, the fatal words, when grasping—assuredly through intuition—the cause of my discomfiture, he hugged me yet closer to his breast, saying: “Never mind, Sweetie; you shall always be *my* girl.”

And there, reader, you have my earliest recollection of my father.

# OLD NAVAL DAYS

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

To the indifferent orthography of former days, as well as to the destruction, during the Revolutionary period, of the records of Goochland County, Virginia, may be attributed, at least in part, the difficulties encountered in attempting to obtain authentic information concerning the Radford ancestry.

Once indeed I heard my father say that he believed his great-grandfather was the first member of our family to come to this country; but, while that *may* have been the case, a study of the annals of Henrico Parish, Virginia, shows that the name was one well known there many years before that time.

Old records mention three youths of the name of Radford, of ages varying from sixteen to twenty years, who left England in the year 1635 to seek their fortunes in the Western world. Of these three but one came to Virginia, the others going respectively to "ye Bermudos," and to the island of St. Christopher in the Lesser Antilles. He who came to Virginia was one Francis Ratford, who "embarked in the Primrose, July 27th, 1635, age 20."

The Christian name "Francis" we find recurring through succeeding generations, while the family name is mentioned indifferently as Ratford, Redford, or Radford.

In a memorial volume of genealogy entitled: "The Cabells



and their Kin," we read under the heading: "Redford (Radford)":

"In 1726 Dr. William Cabell, in St. James Parish, Henrico, was Under Sheriff to Captain John Redford, who was High Sheriff of Henrico."

This same Captain John Redford appears upon the register of "Curle's Church" as Vestryman from 1730 until 1752, in which latter year "Mr. Samuel Duval was elected Vestryman in room of John Redford, deceased."

Captain John Redford left a numerous family, and the Vestry Book of St. James' Parish, Goochland County, bears upon its pages for the year 1771 the family name of Redford which, in connection with the same baptismal names, becomes in 1775 Radford.

The foregoing explains—in the United States War Department's record of the services of Sergeant William Radford of the Continental Army (my father's grandfather)—the interpolation of the words: "borne also as Redford."

While in my mind there exists no doubt as to the above mentioned Sergeant William Radford's being a grandson of Captain John—though from which of the latter's five sons, Francis, John, William, Milner or Edward he was descended it would be impossible to say—still, because of there being no documentary evidence we will simply dismiss the question and take up the history of the Radford ancestry from the point where we find definite data.

My father's grandfather, William Radford 1st, was born in Goochland County, Virginia, in the year 1759, the only son of a widow of Tory proclivities. While visiting with his mother, during the summer of 1776, at the home of the Geddes Winstons' in Hanover County, this lad of seventeen went with a numerous party to hear a patriotic address delivered by the recently elected

Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Patrick Henry. So carried away were his hearers by the eloquence of this orator, whom Eckenrode describes as "the first great Representative of the American Democracy and still its most splendid and magnetic Personality," that a company was then and there formed, which young Radford joined in direct opposition to his mother's will, nor could any subsequent pleading on her part induce him to reconsider his decision.

Mr. Charles Dabney, a Hanover man, speaks in a letter of that period of "The Independent Company of Hanover," formed at "Merry Oaks," a tavern in the neighborhood of Hanover Court House, where Patrick Henry "in a very animated speech pointed out the necessity of our having recourse to arms in defense of our rights, and recommended in strong terms that we should immediately form ourselves into a volunteer company."

In the records of the U. S. War Department, to which reference has already been made, we read: "One William Radford (borne also as Redford) served as Sergeant in Captain Holmon Mennis's Company, 1st Virginia Regiment, Commanded by Colonel Burgess Ball, Revolutionary War. He enlisted August 4th, 1776, to serve during the war, and his name appears on the rolls for the period from June, 1777, to November, 1779."

The date of August 4, 1776, evidently refers to that of the formation of this volunteer company, and that of June, 1777, to the time of his transference to the 1st Virginia Regiment of the Continental Army.

We have no further record of his service, beyond that of a paper received from the Virginia State Library which certifies "that William Radford enlisted in the 1st Va. Cont'l Regm't, in the year 1777, that he re-enlisted for the war and served as Serg't and Serg't Maj'r till the day of Buford's defeat, when he

was wounded and *died of his wounds* while in the service of the United States.

(signed) Ballard Smith, late Lt. 1st, Va. Regm't,

21 Sept. 1787."

Despite the apparent finality of this statement everything points to the fact that the above mentioned paper relates to our ancestor, with, however, the essential difference that instead of "dying of his wounds" he was made a prisoner and sent with other captives to England. For similar cases we have but to glance at the records of the recent war, where numbers reported as dead have since returned safely to their homes.

In his "History of the American Revolution," Fiske writes: "Charleston having surrendered"—in May, 1780,—“to an overwhelming superiority of British force, Clinton sent expeditions to seize other strategic points in the interior of South Carolina. A regiment of the Virginia line, under Colonel Buford, that had been hastening to the relief of the beleaguered city turned back upon hearing of its fall and retreated northward.” But Tarleton—"England's hunting leopard,"—was too swift for them, and "overtaking Buford at Waxhaws, near the North Carolina border, he there cut the Virginia force to pieces, slaying 113, and capturing the rest. Not a vestige of an American army was left in all South Carolina."

Fiske furthermore quotes an item from Tarleton's report of this engagement which is not without interest in connection with our subject.

"In it," writes the historian, "he (Tarleton) represents that his advance guard overtook and charged a Sergeant and four of Buford's cavalry in rear of their infantry and took them prisoners."

That battle, as the report shows, was a terrible massacre, and



what more natural than that errors should have occurred in the lists of those killed or taken prisoners. It must furthermore be borne in mind that Lieut. Ballard Smith's report was written seven years after the battle, and that memory oft-times plays us treacherous tricks.

Certain it is that Sergeant William Radford was made prisoner by Banastre Tarleton, and sent with other prisoners to England, where they were confined, according to family tradition, in the Tower of London. After a long imprisonment Radford, together with a comrade by the name of Floyd, managed to escape, and crossing the Channel, the two young men presented themselves to their country's great friend and ally, General La Fayette, who, "treated them with the utmost hospitality, and furnished them with ample funds to enable them to return to Virginia."<sup>1</sup>

While in Paris William Radford was presented by General La Fayette to Queen Marie Antoinette, and there are in the family a brace of pistols and a pair of golden buckles said to have been received by him as presents from this gracious and unhappy Queen, whose ever fervent admirer he proved himself by giving her name to one of his own daughters (Marie Antoinette Radford—Mrs. Henry Edmundson), which name is perpetuated in that branch of the family to the present day.

Returning to Virginia, Radford found that his mother had married a Colonel Prather, and had gone with him to the West, and, "despite diligent inquiry" he was never able to learn anything further about her. While such a thing appears incredible to-day, all family records testify as to the accuracy of this statement. It must furthermore be remembered that Sergeant Radford had been officially reported as killed in the battle with Tarleton's forces, and this report, had she seen it, would have definitely eliminated from his mother's mind all hope of his possible return.

<sup>1</sup> George Wythe Munford: "The Two Parsons," a family record.

In his distress he bethought him of his mother's friend Mrs. Winston, and going to Laurel Grove, the Winstons' beautiful home in Hanover County, he, although unable to obtain tidings of her whom he sought, met there, and shortly afterward married, Rebecca, eldest daughter of the household.

"Within the first quarter of the century," writes the historian William Wirt Henry, "three brothers of the ancient and honorable family of Winston, of Yorkshire, England, emigrated from Wales to the Colony of Virginia. They were named William, Isaac, and James, and from them have descended a numerous posterity, which has embraced many of the most distinguished of American citizens."

William, or William Essex, to give his full name, married Sarah Geddes, and it was their son, Geddes Winston, who was the owner of Laurel Grove, where he lived with his family.

Governor Henry's mother was Sarah, daughter of Isaac Winston, who married first Colonel John Syme, and after his death John Henry, father of Patrick. Geddes Winston and Sarah Winston Henry were consequently first cousins.

William Radford and his young wife settled in Richmond, where they "for some time resided in a large frame building, with a two-story portico in front, which then stood on the corner of Grace and First streets."

Amongst other activities Mr. Radford "became joint owner with his brother-in-law, Mr. Thomas Rutherford, of the Albion Mills in Richmond."

That William Radford was a member of the Episcopal Church is shown by an old prayer book still owned by the family, bearing his name with the years of his birth and marriage and the date of his death. On April 4, 1803, after twenty happy married years, he departed this life, leaving his wife comfortably pro-



WILLIAM RADFORD 1st of Goochland Co., Va., Sergeant, 1st Va. Regt.,  
Revolutionary War, and His Daughter, MARIE ANTOINETTE RADFORD



vided for as to fortune, and with six children, one of whom was my grandfather, John Radford.

The other children of William and Rebecca Radford were: Carlton, who moved to Kentucky, where he and his family were lost sight of; William II, born May 27, 1787, a prominent citizen of Bedford County and president of a bank in Lynchburg; (it was for his branch of the family that the town of Radford, Va., was named); Mary (Mrs. John Preston); Sarah (Mrs. Wm. Munford); and Marie Antoinette (Mrs. Edmundson), born in 1793, the youngest of the family.

Rebecca Radford outlived her husband by seventeen years; and Colonel Wythe Munford, her grandson, who remembered his grandmother perfectly, said of her: "She had a wonderful talent for description and anecdote, and there were few children she could not attract by telling them incidents of the Revolutionary War."

On December 23, 1806, John Radford (son of William and Rebecca), then twenty-one years of age, married Harriet Kennerly, a bride of eighteen, at the home of her uncle, Colonel George Hancock, at Fincastle, Va.; and by the same ceremony that united this young couple Colonel Hancock's eldest daughter, Mary, became the wife of John Caswell Griffin, of Fincastle.

Samuel Kennerly, father of Harriet, came of a family claiming descent from one James Kennerly who was knighted on the battlefield of Falkirk, in 1298. Responding immediately to the call for volunteers at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, he had served in the Cherokee Expedition, and was present at the battle of Guilford, March 15, 1781, where, as a War Department record tells us, he was wounded in the head. He was promoted for rescuing a regimental flag at the battle of the Cowpens, which flag was in the family's possession until 1829 when



the house in Fincastle was destroyed by fire, and this, with other valuable relics, was lost.

Samuel Kennerly's wife was Mary Hancock, sister of the Colonel. The Hancocks were amongst the founders of the Colony of Virginia; the first William Hancock came over with Captain John Smith, "in search of Forrest for his buildings of ships," and was "massacred by ye salvages at Thorpes' House, Berkeley Hundred."

In 1630, Augustin, son and heir of William, came to Virginia to claim his father's estate, and from him, as is shown by the Hancock family Bible, is descended the Virginia family of that name.

Harriet's uncle, George Hancock, served through the Revolutionary War, and, being on Pulaski's staff, the young Colonel received the body of the illustrious Pole as he fell at the siege of Savannah. The war ended, George Hancock studied law, married Margaret Strother, niece of Samuel Kennerly, and settled at Fincastle. He attained great distinction as a lawyer, and served under General George Washington's administration as member of Congress from Virginia.

Harriet Kennerly, born July 25, 1788, was but a child when her mother died, and from that time she became a member of her uncle's household, growing up as one of his family, but because of this suffering no estrangement from her father or her brothers George and James. To her cousin Julia Hancock, who was one year younger than herself, Harriet was devotedly attached, this attachment, which was reciprocal, remaining unbroken throughout their lives.

John and Harriet Radford settled in Fincastle, Va., and there on September 9, 1809, William Radford, the subject of these records, was born.

Of his earliest years we have no account, and only know that

when he was but two years old his parents moved to Maysville, Ky., where, on March 5, 1812, a daughter, Mary Preston, was born. Four years later—on June 6, 1816,—another son, John Desborough, was added to the family, and within a year after that event John Radford—then but thirty-one years of age—was killed in a hunting accident. Having shot a wild boar, he was bending, knife in hand, to despatch his prey, when the beast, rallying unexpectedly, made a last desperate lunge and gored his would-be captor in a vital spot.

Left a widow with three children, of whom William the eldest was only in his eighth year, Harriet determined she would no longer remain in Maysville; nor was she long in coming to a decision as to her destination. Her brother James was then living in St. Louis, where was also her beloved cousin Julia, who, one year after her own marriage, had become the wife of General William Clark, then Territorial Governor of Missouri, and what more natural than that her thoughts should turn to them? Her father, having remarried, had no need of her, therefore, with the briefest possible delay, she set forth upon that momentous journey which was to take her forever from the spot where she had spent the few happy years that had met with so tragic a termination.

## CHAPTER II

### EARLY DAYS IN ST. LOUIS

It was a stirring time for a wide-awake boy of William Radford's age to arrive in this great frontier town and to find himself plunged, as it were, into the very heart of its teeming activities.

Harriet Radford and her children made their home with her brother James Kennerly, who was then private secretary to Governor Clark. Whether they arrived in time for his wedding we do not know, but on June 10th, of that year, 1817, James Kennerly married Élise Marie Saugrain, daughter of a distinguished French scientist, who was the first permanent physician to settle in St. Louis. He it was who had furnished Captains Lewis and Clark with thermometers, scientific apparatus and medicines, as well as with the first known sulphur matches, which proved so valuable an asset upon their memorable journey. The famous transcontinental expedition of Captains Lewis and Clark left Pittsburg in the autumn of 1803; wintered at River Dubois, opposite the mouth of the Missouri, during the winter of 1803-04; started up the Missouri in May, 1804; wintered in 1804-05 at Fort Mandan, on the Missouri; reached the Pacific Ocean, by way of Columbia River, in November following; spent the winter of 1805-06 at Fort Clatsop, near the mouth of the Columbia; and returning reached St. Louis September 23, 1806.

It was during the final days of one of the greatest Indian councils ever held in the Mississippi Valley that Mrs. Radford and her



children reached St. Louis. This council, which had been called together by Governor Clark for the purpose of acquainting the Indian chiefs with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent in December, 1814, and the consequent cessation of hostilities between the United States and Great Britain, lasted three years.

In summoning together the tribes for this important occasion James Kennerly had played no insignificant rôle, as he had volunteered—when the most intrepid of the scouts faltered—for the hazardous duty of bearing the Governor's message to the hostile Sioux and Chippewas. At the risk of his life the faithful secretary went up the Mississippi to bring in the absent tribes, saying grimly upon his return: "The Chippewas would have murdered me but for the timely arrival of the Sioux."

Deputations to the number of two thousand came down the river in barges to make treaties and settle troubles arising out of the war of 1812. The streets of St. Louis swarmed with red warriors, making the town resplendent with life and color as they moved with stately stride to and from the Government House. "The Chiefs brought with them their squaws and children; Sioux from the Lakes, in canoes of white birch, light and bounding as cork; Sioux of the Missouri in clumsy pirogues; Mandans in skin coracles, barges, dug-outs, and cinnamon-brown fleets of last year's bark."<sup>1</sup>

"About the first of July," writes Mrs. Dye, "Governor Clark of Missouri, Governor Edwards of Illinois, and Auguste Chouteau of St. Louis opened the Council—all in queues, high collared coats, and ruffled shirts, facing each other and the chiefs."

In front of their tents sat the tawny warriors, listening with dignified attention to the interpretation of each sentence.

"The long and bloody war is over. The British have gone

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. E. E. Dye, "The Conquest."

back over the Big Water," said Governor Clark, "and now we have sent for you, my brothers, to conclude a treaty of peace."

That first summer and the next, and yet again the next, were spent in making treaties, until at last there was peace along the border and all the haughty chiefs had signed. And it was during the final days of this greatest of Indian Councils that William Radford made his first acquaintance with St. Louis. Many happy hours of his boyhood days must have been spent in the Government House, which was then the René Kiersereau cottage on the Rue Royale, of which Mrs. Dye says: "The old French house of René Kiersereau dated back to the beginning of St. Louis. Built of heavy timbers and plastered with rubble and mortar, it bade fair still to withstand the wear and tear of generations. With a long low porch in front and rear, and a fence of cedar pickets like a miniature stockade, it differed in no respect from the other modest cottages of St. Louis. Back of the house rushed the river; before it, locusts and lightning bugs flitted in the summer garden. Beside the Kiersereau house Clark had his Indian office in the small stone store of Alexis Marie."

Here, then, it was that William Radford played in his youth with his cousin Meriwether Lewis Clark, born some months earlier but in the same year. It is easy to picture to oneself the eager interest these two venturesome boys must have taken in all the daily happenings of the time. A wonderful event, during that summer of 1817, was the arrival of the first steamboat at St. Louis. To greet it the entire population flocked to the river brink, and the Indians, alarmed lest it should climb the bank and pursue them, rushed pellmell into Clark's Council House to implore protection from the monster.

Young Radford had ample opportunity, during those early years, to become well acquainted with the aborigines, whose visits

to St. Louis in no wise ceased with the closing of the Council. As regularly as the coming of spring friendly Indians would appear and settle themselves around the lake at "Maracasta," Governor Clark's farm west of St. Louis, until the grounds would be fairly covered with wigwams. Furthermore, James Kennerly, (who, in addition to his other duties had been appointed Indian Deputy), kept open house for the chiefs at Côte Plaquemine (Persimmon Hill), his country home, which was also, as has been said, the home of Harriet Radford and her children.

To those early associations William Radford's life-long fondness for hunting was undoubtedly due, as well as his more than ordinary skill with the rifle and shot-gun. One animal there was, however, which in later years, he invariably declined to shoot, and that was a deer, giving as a reason that having, when a young man, shot one of these lordly denizens of the wilds, he had been met, in stooping to give the animal its *coup-de-grace*, by so humanly imploring a glance that he never had the heart to kill another.

"In 1818 Governor Clark built an imposing residence with a large hall which for many years was used as a Council Room for Indian Treaty Conventions, and as a Museum of Indian curiosities. Here were Indian dresses decorated with feathers; weapons, such as bows and arrows; battle clubs and stone axes; birch bark canoes suspended from the ceiling; skins of animals; the bones of a mastodon and other interesting specimens and relics. This hall was also the scene of numerous banquets, patriotic celebrations and other popular gatherings, thus largely entering into the daily life of St. Louis three quarters of a century ago. . . . The General was also prominent in the Indian fur trade of the great region whose gates Lewis and himself had opened to commerce. He was one of those who helped to establish Christ Church in St. Louis, thus becoming one of the

founders of the Protestant Episcopal Communion west of the Mississippi.”<sup>1</sup>

In this house William Radford spent many of his early days in St. Louis and it later became his home. Many a time have I heard my father speak of that great Council Hall and of the stirring scenes he had witnessed there, as the Indians came to Governor Clark for the settlement of every difficulty, and to them his word was law.

There was one story which my father always enjoyed telling. After he had grown to manhood, being present one day in the Council Hall during one of these stately gatherings, he beheld an officer of the United States Army step up to an imposing chief, and heard him (evidently desirous of making friendly advances) say: “We should be friends, for I also have Indian blood in my veins.”

Calmly the chief scrutinized the speaker, and then drawing himself haughtily aloof and pointing to the latter’s curly ebon locks, he said gravely:

“No Indian—NIG!”

When, as a young girl, I was visiting at the old Clark place on the outskirts of St. Louis, then the property of my uncle Mr. Jefferson Clark, my uncle in speaking to me of what a wonderful shot my father was, told me that he himself, when a lad, had one day done something in that line which he considered very creditable, but upon appealing for commendation to an old family servant had been able to elicit from him only the words: “’Tain’t bad, Mar’sr Jeff, but you’ll never shoot like Mar’sr William.”

In the spring of 1819 there came from Paris to St. Louis a

<sup>1</sup> Extract from address of Prof. Reuben G. Thwaites, secretary of the Historical Society of Wisconsin, and editor of the Lewis and Clark journals, at the unveiling of the Memorial Tablet which marks the spot where stood the former residence of Governor Clark, at Broadway and Olive Street. This ceremony took place on September 23, 1906, the one hundredth anniversary of the return of the expedition.



young American artist, one Chester Harding, who painted many portraits there.

Among his sitters were Governor Clark and his wife Julia, as also Harriet Radford, and those three portraits are in the possession of the family today.

Hardly were these portraits completed, however, before Julia was taken ill, and in accordance with the advice of their physician, Governor Clark took his wife and their three boys, Meriwether Lewis, George Rogers (named for Governor Clark's distinguished brother), and Julius, to Fotheringay, the beautiful home built by Colonel Hancock in the mountains of Virginia shortly after Julia's marriage. There for a time Mrs. Clark appeared to rally, so much so indeed that when, the succeeding winter, important matters demanded Governor Clark's presence in St. Louis, he left her with no apprehension of danger.

Hardly, however, had he reached his journey's end before a swift messenger came bearing the dread tidings that his wife had been taken from this world. Returning immediately to Fotheringay he there attended a double funeral, Colonel Hancock having survived his daughter but a few days.

High on the hillside overlooking the Happy Valley, where flow the head waters of the Roanoke, in the white mausoleum he had himself caused to be excavated from the solid rock, the earthly remains of Col. George Hancock and his daughter Julia were laid, and to this day the darkies of that region say with trembling: "De Cunnel, he set up dah in a stone chair so's he cud look down de valley and see his slaves at deir work."

When General Clark returned with his three little boys to St. Louis, Missouri had become a State, a new governor had been elected, and the seat of government had been transferred to St. Charles. But although governors came and governors went, the

officer who had held the position through seven Territorial years was always addressed as Governor Clark.

Family tradition has it that Julia, upon realizing the serious character of her illness, had suggested to General Clark that, should he think of remarrying he would "bear in mind" her cousin Harriet.

Be that as it may, the fact is that a little over one year after Julia's death, in the autumn of 1821,—to quote Mrs. Dye—"the most noted citizen of St. Louis married the handsome widow Radford." Again, in speaking of this event, the author of "The Conquest" writes that the "vivacious Creole girls gossiping over their tea in their wide verandas exclaimed, 'From Philadelphia she haf a wedding trousseau,' and yet again, 'she haf de majesty look, like one queen.'"

From the home of her brother, James Kennerly, taking her two younger children, Mary and John, with her, went Harriet to take her place as the wife of the ex-Governor, then Superintendent of Indian Affairs, "whose word was Indian law from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean."

And what of Harriet's twelve year old son William at that time? Just why he should have elected to act as he did upon the occasion of his mother's marriage to General Clark has always remained a mystery, but, for whatever cause it may have been, he stoutly refused to leave his uncle's home for that of his stepfather, and so determined was he about the matter that his mother was obliged to follow the one course remaining open under the circumstances, and that was, to send him away to boarding-school.

Thus, by ways devious and unlooked-for, does an All-Wise Providence lead man to the fulfilling of his destiny.

## CHAPTER III

### LA FAYETTE

ON the 7th of September, 1825, the U. S. frigate *Brandywine* lay at anchor at the mouth of the Potomac River.

Built at the Washington Navy Yard for the special service of bearing General La Fayette and his suite on their return journey to France, the *Brandywine* had been launched on June 16th, and Commodore Morris says in his autobiography that the "officers had been selected so that there should be at least one from each state, and when practicable, descendants of persons distinguished in the Revolution."

She was named for Brandywine Creek, Delaware, the scene of the battle in which La Fayette was wounded on September 11, 1777.

"It is customary," wrote President Adams to La Fayette, "to designate our frigates by the names of the rivers of the United States; to conform to this custom, and make it accord with the desire we have to perpetuate a name that recalls that glorious event of our revolutionary war, in which you sealed with your blood your devotion to our principles, we have given the name of *Brandywine* to the new frigate to which we confide the honorable mission of returning you to the wishes of your country and family. The command of the *Brandywine* will be intrusted to one of the most distinguished officers of our Navy, Captain Charles Morris, who has orders to land you under the protection of our flag, in whatever European port you please to designate."

In "The Port-Folio," for September, 1824, we find the following:

"It having been understood that General de la Fayette intended to visit this country, Congress, at the last session, resolved that a national vessel should be despatched for the purpose of conveying him to our shores. He declined that honor, but took his passage in the ship *Cadmus*, for New York, where he arrived on the 16th of August.

"The Committee of arrangement of the Corporation, officers of the United States Army and Navy, officers of the Militia holding the rank of Major and Brigadier Generals, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, and a committee from the society of the Cincinnati at 11 o'clock A.M. proceeded to Staten Island, for the purpose of accompanying him to the city. The steamboat *Chancellor Livingston* was employed for the purpose of conveying him from Staten Island to the battery, and was accompanied by the *Cadmus* highly dressed and decorated with colors, and towed by steamboats; and the steamship *Robert Fulton*, the steamboats *Connecticut*, *Oliver Ellsworth*, *Bellona* and *Nautilus*, all richly and elegantly dressed in colors and crowded with passengers desirous of witnessing the ceremony.

"The ceremonies at the island having been finished, the General was received on board, and the gay and impressive procession returned to the city. He was landed at the battery a little before two o'clock, having been saluted as he passed up the bay by a discharge from the ship *Importer*, and from Governor's Island, and was received amidst the shouts of an immense concourse of people.

"From the battery he proceeded in an open carriage up Broadway to the city hall, escorted by the military, under the command of Major General Morton, where he was received by the Common Council, and an address was made by the Mayor, to which the General made an appropriate answer.

"After the adjournment of the Common Council, he received



the marching salute in front of the city hall, and again entered the hall accompanied by his son and suite, and in the Governor's room received the society of the Cincinnati, composed of his surviving brothers and companions in the field, a small number of whom still remain to congratulate their fellow soldier. Here also he was met by the officers of the Army and Navy, and many citizens and strangers. From the hall he was accompanied by the Common Council and many distinguished persons to the city hotel to dine, escorted by the military.

"The whole exhibition, from the landing at the battery to the time of the dispersion of the people at the park, was in a high degree interesting and gratifying. The numbers collected were perhaps unequaled on any former festive occasion. The bells of the different churches rang a merry peal. The houses through Broadway were filled with spectators of the first respectability and the street was crowded with people.

"The day was singularly fine for the occasion. The water scene exceeded in splendor and effect anything of the kind that has ever been exhibited here. The appearance of the military was highly creditable in equipment, movements and discipline; and we have not a doubt their appearance, when contrasted by his recollection with the suffering troops of the War of Independence, must have made a deep impression on the General's mind.

"In the evening all the public places were brilliantly illuminated, rockets were thrown up, and the streets were thronged to a late hour. Castle Garden, particularly, where General La Fayette landed, and where he remained for some time on his first reaching the city, was brilliantly illuminated last evening, and crowded with beauty and fashion.

"Nearly all business was suspended yesterday, and the stores of every description were closed at an early hour in the forenoon.

Indeed scarcely a person could be seen in any of the streets except those through which General La Fayette was to pass.

"The chivalrous generosity with which La Fayette espoused our uncertain fortunes excited not less admiration than gratitude, and every American has contemplated his subsequent career with lively sympathy.

"During his captivity in the Austrian and Prussian dungeons he was supplied with money through our Minister in London, by order of President Washington, who also sent one of the brothers of Chief Justice Marshall to the Continent of Europe to solicit his liberation, with an urgent letter, written by himself as an individual.

"He was well received at the Austrian Court, and complimented as a fine young American, whilst the greatest veneration was expressed for General Washington. But whilst they were amusing Mr. Marshall with their courtesies, they transferred the illustrious prisoner to the Prussians, and then expressed their regret that they could not gratify the wishes of his great friend.

"Since the acquisition of Louisiana, Congress passed a law granting a bounty in lands to General La Fayette. Mr. Madison, having been appointed his agent, the location was made, consistently with the terms of the law, upon some vacant lands in the Island of New Orleans, of great value. These, we believe, he afterwards sold."

General La Fayette, accompanied by his son, George Washington La Fayette, and his secretary, A. Levasseur, had embarked at Havre, on July 13, 1824, for his last visit to the United States, which proved to be a triumphal procession, from the day of his arrival in New York until that of his departure.

"When it was rumored," writes Levasseur in his diary, "that the *Brandywine* was destined to conduct La Fayette back to France, all those parents who intended their children for the

Navy were ambitious to obtain them a berth on board the frigate, and the President found himself beset with petitions from all parts of the Union. Not being able to satisfy all, but at the same time wishing to amalgamate as much as possible private interests with public good, he decided that each state should be represented by a midshipman, and hence the *Brandywine* had on board 24, instead of 8 or 10, as is usual in vessels of her size."

Among this representative group of midshipmen was William Radford, whom we left at the age of twelve about starting for boarding-school.

According to his own statement the school to which he was sent was at Perth Amboy, N. J., and there this inland-bred lad first beheld the sea. The ships passing to and fro were to him a source of never-ending wonder, and the questions: "Where do they come from?" and "Where are they going?" forced themselves with deep and ever deeper tenacity upon his mind, until finally the desire to ascertain for himself the answers to these queries became so all-absorbing that he wrote to his stepfather, General Clark, with whom he was then on the best of terms, asking that he obtain for him an appointment in the Navy.

A personal letter from General Clark to President Adams brought about the desired result, and William Radford received his appointment as midshipman in the U. S. Navy, the said appointment dating from March 1, 1825. Although born in Virginia he is listed as entering from Missouri, which state was then his home. (That being before the days of the Naval Academy at Annapolis these embryo officers did all their studying on shipboard.)

Although appointed on March 1st, official records show that William Radford was not assigned to any duty until five months after that date, when he reported on August 1, 1825, at the Washington Navy Yard, for duty on the *Brandywine*. As illus-

trative of the remarkable change of conditions that may occur in our country during a lifetime, it is of interest that when young Radford left St. Louis to join his ship he found he was the only passenger in the *weekly* stage starting East from that city.

As his official duty only commenced in August, there is every reason to conclude that he was at home during the visit which General La Fayette made in the month of April of that year to St. Louis, and that he had the honor of being presented to the distinguished Frenchman during the hours the latter spent beneath General Clark's roof. Referring to Levasseur's account of that visit, we read: "We went to see the collection of Indian curiosities made by Governor Clark, which is the most complete that is to be found. We visited it with the greater pleasure from its being shown us by Mr. Clark, who had himself collected all the objects which compose it, while exploring the distant Western regions with Captain Lewis.

"General Clark has visited, near the sources of the Missouri and Mississippi, Indian tribes which, previous to his visit, had never seen a white man, but among whom he nevertheless discovered traces of an ancient people more civilized than themselves. Thus, for example, he brought away with him a whip which the riders of these tribes do not understand the mode of using on their horses . . . and which is actually arranged like the knout of the Cossacks. He presented General La Fayette with a garment bearing a striking resemblance to a Russian riding coat. It is made of buffalo skin prepared so as to retain all its pliancy, as if dressed by the most skilful turner. From these and some other facts Mr. Clark and Captain Lewis, his companion, concluded that there formerly existed, near the Pole, a communication between Asia and America. We could have remained a considerable longer time in Governor Clark's Museum listening to the interesting accounts which he was pleased to





HARRIET KENNERLY RADFORD CLARK





give us relative to his great journey, but were informed that the hour for dinner had arrived, and we went to the house of Mr. Pierre Chouteau," whose dinner guests they were that day.

Not to be outdone in generosity, La Fayette presented General Clark with the mess chest he had used throughout the Revolutionary War, and "placed upon his finger a ring of his hair." The mess chest was a large leather case containing a silver camp service, spoons, forks, etc., and it is in the Clark Museum in St. Louis.

A firm friendship was established between the eminent visitor and General Clark during that brief visit to St. Louis, which is witnessed to by the fact that they corresponded throughout the remaining years of La Fayette's life, which came to a close some four years before that of the General.

A letter from General La Fayette to Governor Clark, dated February 1, 1830, is not without its humorous side, and although of later date, an extract from it may find a place here.

After introducing the bearer, a citizen of Bordeaux, to General Clark, the letter reads: "The Grisly Bear you had the goodness to send me has been the more admired on this side of the Atlantic as it was the first Animal of the kind, living or dead, that had ever made its appearance in Europe. I was inclined to make a pet of him, as he was then very gentle, but it was thought wiser to put him under the care of the Board of Professors at the *Jardin des Plantes* the first European Museum of Natural Philosophy. There he was received with much gratitude to you, the principal donator, and to me. Nor need I add that his large size and ferocious temper have since been developed.

"I have lately received two Ohio deer, quite tame, and have lodged them at La Grange where it is my boast and delight to have collected a number of American keepsakes, and particularly

a precious Museum where your kind presents are carefully kept and greatly admired.

"While I set the higher value on that part of your travels and observations that has been published, I must wish the materials that remain in your hands might be also given to the public of both Hemispheres. I wish it not only as your friend and for the sake of general information, but from the patriotic sense I have of the work as being Highly Creditable to the Nation.

"Be pleased to remember me very affectionately to every member of your excellent family and our friends at St. Louis, and believe me, most Cordially,

"Your sincere, obliged friend,

"Governor Clark.

LA FAYETTE."

General La Fayette having received President J. Q. Adams' letter, given on the opening page of this chapter, and finding the invitation "too honorable and made with too much delicacy to be for an instant refused," hastened to Washington to express his gratitude to the President, and "concert with Captain Morris the day of sailing, which was settled for the 7th of September."

"On the 6th of September," writes Levasseur, "the anniversary of La Fayette's birth, the President gave a grand dinner, to which all the public officers and numerous distinguished guests then in Washington were invited. . . . Although a large company partook of this dinner, and it was intended to celebrate La Fayette's birthday, it was very serious, I may say, almost sad. We were all too much preoccupied by the approaching journey to be joyous; we already felt, by anticipation, the sorrowfulness of separation.

"Toward the conclusion of the repast, the President, contrary

to the diplomatic custom which forbids toasts at his table, arose and proposed the following: 'To the 22nd of February and 6th of September; birthdays of Washington and La Fayette.'

"Profoundly affected to find his name thus associated with Washington's, the General expressed his thanks to the President, and gave this toast: 'To the 4th of July, the birthday of liberty in both hemispheres.'

"The day of our departure," (continues Levasseur), "the 7th of September, dawned radiantly. The workshops were deserted, the stores left unopened, and the people crowded around the President's Mansion, while the Militia was drawn up in line on the road along which the Nation's guest was to move on his way to the shore.

"Accompanied by the Secretaries of State, Treasury and the Navy, the General proceeded to the banks of the Potomac where the steamboat *Mount Vernon* was waiting for him. In a few hours we reached the *Brandywine* which was anchored at the mouth of the Potomac where she only awaited our arrival to set sail. The General was received on board with the greatest honors; the yards were manned, the gunners at their posts, and the marines drawn up on 'deck.

"The Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Southard, alone went on board the *Brandywine* with the General and his suite, to recommend him to the care of Commodore Morris in the name of the American Nation and its Government.

"No sooner had the Secretary of the Navy left the *Brandywine* than the Commodore gave orders to weigh anchor, but at that moment another steamboat hove in sight making signals that she wished to speak with us."

(This proved to be a boat from Baltimore, bringing a large party desirous of seeing General La Fayette once more before his departure.)

"A collation was prepared on board for the numerous guests, at which speeches appropriate to the occasion were made; and so greatly did the said guests enjoy themselves that their visit was prolonged until all thought of sailing for that day had to be abandoned.

"The next morning we stood down the bay, and to sea with a favorable wind."<sup>1</sup>

A poetic touch is given to their departure by Levasseur who writes: "We entered the Chesapeake under full sail, traversing the center of a brilliant rainbow, one of whose limbs appeared to rest on the Maryland shore and the other on that of Virginia. Thus the same sign that appeared in the heavens on the day on which La Fayette landed on American soil also appeared when he left it, as if nature had reserved to herself the erection of the first and the last of the numerous triumphal arches dedicated to him during his extraordinary journey."

Referring to that earlier occasion of which Levasseur speaks, we read in his diary: "The day of our arrival at Staten Island, whilst the General was receiving the congratulations of the people from the balcony of the Vice President's house (Vice President Tompkins) a rainbow, one of whose limbs enveloped and tinged Fort La Fayette with a thousand colors, appeared. The multitude, struck with the beauty and opportuneness of the circumstance, exclaimed that 'Heaven was in unison with America in celebrating the happy arrival of the Friend of the Country.'"

Thus, upon the eve of his sixteenth birthday, did William Radford set forth, under this heaven-sent insignia, to ascertain whence were coming and whither were going these many fair ships with their spreading sails on which so great a portion of his eventful life was henceforth to be spent.

A list of the officers who sailed upon that cruise has been

<sup>1</sup> Commodore Morris's Autobiography.





U. S. S. *Brandwine*, Com. Biddle, off Malta, Nov. 6, 1831.

U. S. S. *Concord*, Capt. Perry, in Background.





recently brought to light amongst papers of my father's, and it may interest some of their descendants.

Captain, Charles Morris  
1st Lt. Francis H. Gregory  
2nd Lt. Blanden Dulany  
3rd Lt. Ralph Voorhes  
4th Lt. Thomas Freelon  
5th Lt. Irvine Shubrick  
6th Lt. David G. Farragut  
7th Lt. John Marston  
Purser, Edward N. Cox

Surgeon, Wm. Birchmore  
Surgeon's Mate, Wm. Plumstead  
Surgeon's Mate, John Brooke  
Sailing Master, Elisha Peck (Com-  
missioned Lieutenant, 1826)  
Captain Marines, Thomas S. Eng-  
lish  
Lieutenant Marines, William A.  
Randolph

## MIDSHIPMEN

Samuel Barron, Virginia  
Thomas W. Brent, Dist. of Col.  
George M. Bache, Phila., Pa.  
Solomon D. Belton, Georgia  
John B. Cutting, Dist. of Columbia  
John A. Davis, Louisiana  
Ezra T. Doughty, New York  
Charles W. Gay, Massachusetts  
Paul H. Haynes, South Carolina  
Henry Hoff, South Carolina  
Harry Ingersoll, Philadelphia, Pa.  
William F. Irving, New York  
Andrew M. Irwin, Pennsylvania

Kinsey Johns, Maryland  
Wm. F. Lynch, Virginia  
James L. Lardner, Pennsylvania  
M. F. Maury, Virginia  
James W. Marshall, Kentucky  
Henry Mifflin, Pennsylvania  
Lewis Ogden, New York  
Cary H. Hansford, Virginia  
Wm. S. Ogden, New York  
Richard L. Page, Virginia  
William D. Porter, Dist. of Col.  
Wm Radford, Missouri  
John W. Willis, Virginia

## PASSENGERS

General La Fayette  
G. W. La Fayette  
D. McCormick, U. S. N. (Sur-  
geon, J.)  
Lt. Bonneville, U. S. A.  
Capt. Geo. C. Read, U. S. N.

Lt. Isaac Mayo, U. S. N., Virginia  
Mr. Summerville, U. S. Minister  
to Stockholm  
A. Levasseur, Secretary to Gen-  
eral La Fayette

This list was sent to Rear Admiral Wm. Radford in the year 1886 by Solomon D. Belton, one of the midshipmen who had made this cruise sixty-one years earlier, with a letter which will be given in its fitting time and place. To this list Belton adds a postscript saying: "I have forgotten our Surgeon's name, & may be mistaken in the one I give. He was lost on the *Hornet* in the West Indies."

The first of the adventures with which William Radford was

to meet in his sea-faring life was far from being an agreeable one, as scarcely had the pilot left before it was discovered that the ship was leaking badly, and the precise cause of the leak could not be ascertained, because, as Levasseur pathetically remarks: "We were experiencing all the agonies of rolling and pitching horribly combined."

For Commodore Morris it was an awkward dilemma. Was it his duty to return, or dare he expose General La Fayette and others to serious hazard by continuing their journey? La Fayette himself settled the question by refusing categorically to return except in case of "absolute necessity," and as the leak was under control by the pumps and gradually diminished as the planks swelled from immersion, they continued on their way.

A misadventure, heartrending for our young midshipmen, befell them at the very outset of their journey. A steward, in cleaning the uniform of one of the officers, set the bottle of turpentine he was using for this purpose on the barrel of sugar belonging to their mess, and, in a sudden lurch of the ship, the bottle upset, emptying its entire contents through a crack into the barrel. During all that crossing the boys drank their coffee and ate their desserts strongly flavored with turpentine! Small wonder was it that in recalling that voyage William Radford always said that "the food was very bad."

The midshipmen on the *Brandywine* were each and all enthusiastic admirers of General La Fayette, while he himself was "deeply gratified"—(we have his secretary's word for it)—"thus to find himself surrounded by these young representatives of the Republic he had visited with so much pleasure, not only as their presence recalled spots he loved, but also as some of them being sons (or grandsons) of old Revolutionary soldiers, gave him an opportunity of speaking of his former companions-in-arms; and the young men, on their part, proud of the mission they

were engaged in, endeavored to render themselves worthy of it by strict attention to study and the performance of their duties."

The passage was a stormy and most uncomfortable one, notwithstanding which, they made excellent time, sighting the French coast twenty-four days after leaving the Chesapeake.

"The morning after our arrival," writes Commodore Morris, "the wife and children of George La Fayette, with M. de Lasteyrie, son-in-law of La Fayette, and his children, came on board to meet the General and his son, and after passing a few hours they all returned together to the shore. Before leaving the ship the General was entreated to ask for anything he might desire to take with him, when he requested the flag of the ship under which he had been received on board, and this was immediately presented."

In taking it from the hands of the first lieutenant of the ship, Mr. Gregory, General La Fayette asserted with deep emotion that it should be displayed from the most prominent part of his house at La Grange, "where it will testify to all who may see it the kindness of the American Nation towards its adopted and devoted son."

"The paternal friendship shown by the General for the midshipmen during the voyage," says Levasseur, "had so completely gained their affection that they could not separate from him without shedding tears." I doubt the applicability of this statement to William Radford, who, whatever may have been his feelings, was not addicted to outward expressions of emotion. "They begged," pursues the diary, "that he would permit them to offer him a durable mark of their filial attachment that would also recall to his mind the days passed with them on board the *Brandywine*."

This present, which was received by General La Fayette shortly after his arrival at Paris was "a silver Urn of antique

form and beautifully engraved. The neck of it is surrounded with wine leaves gracefully arranged, and two heads of river-gods serve as the handles. The American eagle which is carved on one of the sides, grasps in one of his talons a bundle of javelins and in the other an olive branch. Acanthus leaves ornament the base of the vase, the square stand of which, supported by four lions' feet, presents on three of its sides an equal number of bas-reliefs, representing the Capitol at Washington, the visit of La Fayette to the tomb of Washington, and the arrival of the *Brandywine* at Havre. On the fourth side is inscribed in relief the offering of the Midshipmen of the U. S. frigate *Brandywine* to their paternal friend: 'As a testimony of individual esteem and collective admiration, a tribute to the private worth and public excellency of General La Fayette.'"

This magnificent work was executed at Paris under the direction of Mr. Barnet, the American Consul.

A curious feature of old naval life comes down to us in the story that Midshipman William Radford, who had been liberally supplied with money before leaving home, found himself, upon reaching France, entirely out of pocket, because of having just before sailing, loaned the sum total of his capital to the caterer of the midshipmen's mess.

That he had, however, other funds at his command is evidenced by the fact that there is in the possession of my aunt, Mrs. Jefferson Kearny Clark, now living in New York, (May, 1920), a set of dining-room chairs which go by the name of the "La Fayette chairs," because of their having been purchased by Midshipman Radford for his stepfather General Clark during that voyage.

General La Fayette left the *Brandywine* under a Major General's salute, and three hearty cheers from the ship's company; and Commodore Morris, the object of whose command had been



merely to see the General to France, turned the ship over to the first lieutenant, Mr. Gregory, and left with La Fayette to become his guest at La Grange.

La Grange-en-Brie, 14 leagues distant from Paris, a château which La Fayette called "an inheritance from my unhappy mother-in-law,"—the Duchesse d'Ayen, a victim of the guillotine,—was the residence selected by the La Fayette family as their home in 1800, immediately after the frontiers of France had been opened to him by the effacement of his name from the list of émigrés. La Fayette's joy in finding himself (upon the termination of his exile) once more with his family was tempered by the receipt of the news of the death of Washington (December 14, 1799)—who bequeathed to him a pair of pistols, which are reverently preserved in the Museum at La Grange, along with a pair of field glasses from the same donor, and a piece of tapestry worked by Madam Washington at the age of 70.

"Among La Fayette's most curious possessions at La Grange is a Missouri bear," writes André de Maricourt,<sup>1</sup> referring to the grizzly of whose coming we have already read.

La Fayette's oldest daughter, Anastasie, married M. de La Tour-Maubourg, brother of his favorite aide-de-camp; and Virginie, the second, married in 1802, Louis de Lasteyrie, and it is their grandson, the Marquis de Lasteyrie, who is today the owner of the château of La Grange.

Madame de La Fayette, whose health had been greatly impaired by the years of captivity which she had voluntarily shared with her husband in the prison of Olmutz, and the succeeding years of exile, was taken from this world on the 24th of December, 1807, at 48 years of age. La Fayette had the apartment of his "Good Angel," as he called his wife, walled up, and there was no portrait to be seen of her in the château. One miniature

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, September, 1919.



of her alone La Fayette kept, and this he carried always with him, wearing it upon his heart, and by his orders it was laid in his coffin when his own last hour came. His son George de La Fayette, married, upon his return from America, Mlle. Destutt de Tracy.

La Fayette's life at La Grange varied little throughout the years. He rose every morning at five o'clock, and dressed with great care in his small second-story room, on whose walls hung the portraits of his father and of many of his ancestors. A great part of the morning was spent in attending to his voluminous correspondence, and in strolling about the château, which he had transformed into a museum of souvenirs.

Breakfast was at ten o'clock, when they sat down often as many as twenty or twenty-five at table. More loquacious than in his youth, he enlivened the conversation with gay sallies. After breakfast, in the drawing-room, there was a general looking over the latest papers, and from twelve o'clock until three, a stroll about the farm and grounds. At four o'clock La Fayette retired to his study where he was writing his "*Mémoires*." Dinner was at six, very simply served, and after that there was music, interspersed with conversation and various kinds of games, from which he often absented himself, returning to his study to work, but reappearing again at half-past ten to kiss his children good-night.

It would be impossible to enumerate the guests who visited La Grange during the latter years of La Fayette's life, but amongst the number came Fenimore Cooper with his family "and several Indians."

La Fayette's return from America on the 9th of October, 1825, was made the occasion of a veritable ovation. Four thousand people took part in the festivities at La Grange, and he was carried in triumph about the estate.

La Fayette departed this life in Paris, May 19, 1834, and no higher testimony of the regard in which his memory is held in the United States could have been given than that contained in General Pershing's memorable salutation: "La Fayette, nous voilà."

"As the President had told General La Fayette in offering him the use of the *Brandywine* to carry him to France, we had for commander one of the most distinguished officers in the American Navy," writes Levasseur; and in bidding Commodore Morris adieu a short sketch of the life and service of the first commander under whose orders William Radford sailed will surely not be amiss.

Charles Morris was born at Woodstock, Conn., July 26, 1784, and passed the first fifteen years of his life in Connecticut and Vermont. He entered the Navy in July, 1799, and the earliest achievement which won for him the special notice of his commanders, was during the war with the Barbary States on the occasion of the recapture and destruction of the American frigate *Philadelphia*, which the corsairs had taken, and were then fitting out for sea, with the design of cruising against our commerce. In 1804 she lay in the harbor of Tripoli, surrounded by Turkish gunboats and batteries, yet the daring plan was conceived of running into the harbor and destroying the ship and its accomplishment entrusted to the gallant Decatur, then a lieutenant. Morris was one of the five midshipmen selected from the *Constitution*, and hence one of the brave seventy-four in the ketch *Intrepid*, which, under convoy of the *Siren*, Commander Stuart, arrived before Tripoli in the afternoon of the 9th of February, 1804. Not until the 16th, however, were all circumstances favorable for an attack, and for this Decatur made his dispositions with admirable sagacity. Morris's part was, after the ship should have been captured, to go into the cockpit and aft storerooms and set them

on fire. So precisely was all the plan carried out that the *Intrepid* was placed completely alongside the *Philadelphia* before the Turks in it raised the cry of "Americanos!" The discipline was perfect, and as Decatur gave the order to board Morris sprang at the rail and was the first of the *Intrepid's* band to stand on the deck of the *Philadelphia*. The surprise was complete, and the splash of Turk after Turk was heard in the water as the enemy made for the shore or for the nearest gunboats. In ten minutes Decatur was master of the *Philadelphia*; in thirty minutes the different parties about the ship had effected their purpose—the noble frigate was in flames and the party were in their boats. Then three rousing cheers proclaimed their victory. Tripoli was soon in an uproar. Turkish cannon roared from the gunboats, corsairs and batteries. As the flames reached the *Philadelphia's* guns, she too, joined in an answering cannonade, while the gallant band, having safely gained the *Intrepid*, merrily rowed down the harbor. This was one of the most brilliant achievements of our Navy.

Passing over eight years of honorable service we find Lieutenant Morris, at the outbreak of the war with England, attached, in the capacity of executive officer, to the frigate *Constitution*, under command of Captain Hull. In July, 1812, the frigate sailed from Annapolis, and on the morning of the 17th, when but a few leagues from the coast, she found herself in the presence of a fleet of the enemy, comprising a ship of the line, four frigates and two smaller vessels, under the command of Commodore Broke. The ocean was nearly calm, and as the morning mist rose from it the enemy already made sure of an easy prize. But the *Constitution*—by a feat of seamanship which, for the skill with which it was conceived, and the manner in which it was executed, has never been paralleled in our naval annals—effected her escape from all the enemy's ships, after an incessant

chase of sixty hours. The whole credit of this successful maneuver (a combination of towing and warping by means of boats and anchors) was ascribed by Captain Hull to Lieutenant Morris, who, some years previously, had been stationed on one of our frigates in the Mediterranean which frequently visited Malta. Her captain would never venture to take her in or out of that harbor under canvas, but always had her kedged in and out, to the great mortification of the ward-room officers, who felt and knew they could maneuver and handle the vessel under canvas as well as the British ships, which always came in and went out in that mode. Though the British officers would smile at this cautious mode of proceeding, they were obliged to admire the promptness and dexterity with which the thing was done; and it was the experience then and thus obtained which enabled Lieutenant Morris so successfully to elude his pursuers. He frequently observed in after life that he little thought, when he was learning what to him was so mortifying a lesson, he would ever have occasion to make such a practical application of it.

During the same season, while still occupying his post as first lieutenant of the *Constitution*, that ship fell in with the British frigate *Guerrière*, one of the squadron of Commodore Broke. The two vessels came for a few minutes into close quarters, and as their sides touched each other, Lieutenant Morris with his own hands lashed them together. In the fierce fight of musketry and short swords that ensued, the gallant lieutenant, at the head of his boarders, fell, pierced by a ball that passed through his body, just missing the vital organs. The bloody conflict was crowned with victory, and Lieutenant Morris, in September, 1813, was promoted for special services over the heads of some of his seniors in the Navy to the rank of Post-Captain, his commission being dated from the day of the surrender of the *Guerrière*.

After the close of the war Morris was appointed in succession



to several important commands, both at sea and on shore; and while on the Brazil station he was on intimate terms with the British Admiral then in command there, who subsequently stated that he considered Commodore Morris had no superior as a naval officer in the world, and that he knew more about the British Navy than he, the Admiral, knew himself. He was forty-one years of age when appointed to the command of the national ship that was to bear General La Fayette on his return journey to his native land, and higher praise cannot be accorded than is contained in the statement, that, "Commodore Morris was remarkable for the influence he possessed over those under his command, and also for the respect they entertained for him."

The *Brandywine's* stay at Havre was a short one, for she reached Cowes on October 9th, leaving there on the 22nd, under command of Lieut. F. H. Gregory, to join Commodore John Rodgers' squadron in the Mediterranean. Arriving at Gibraltar on November 2nd, she there found assembled the fleet, consisting of the flagship *North Carolina*, 74 guns, the frigate *Constitution*, and the sloops *Ontario* and *Erie*, and joining them, became from that date a unit of the squadron.



## CHAPTER IV

### UNDER COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS

COMMODORE JOHN RODGERS, then in command of the Mediterranean Squadron, was part and parcel of the old Navy—the navy of sailing ships, self-trained officers, and bluff hardy seamen.

Born in Havre-de-Grace, Maryland, in the year 1773, he, when but thirteen years of age, set out on foot for Baltimore, thirty-five miles distant, where he joined a merchant ship, the *Maryland*, as apprentice, and before attaining his twentieth year he had obtained command of a fine vessel, the *Jane*, engaged in European trade.

After spending eleven years at sea, during which he had risen from an apprenticeship before the mast to a captaincy, Rodgers, in 1797, left the merchant service. He was then twenty-four, and when, in 1798, the first three vessels of a fleet of six, the construction of which Congress had authorized, were being officered and fitted for sea, John Rodgers was appointed second lieutenant aboard the *Constellation*. He was exceedingly fortunate in his first assignment to duty, for no service during the naval war with France was so desirable as that on board the frigate *Constellation* under her Commander, Commodore Thomas Truxtun.

The frigate *Constellation*, which was built at the shipyard of David Stodder in Baltimore, has been described as one of those happy first products of our navy that were never afterwards surpassed. In beauty of hull she was not even equaled by the famous *Constitution*.

Truxtun's duty was to "protect American commerce from the

depredation of French vessels," and this, through the summer and autumn of 1798, he successfully accomplished. In January, 1799, there were only two French ships of war in the West Indies, the *Volontaire*, 40 guns, and *Insurgente*, 36. These frigates had lately arrived out from France, and had captured the schooner *Retaliation*, 14, Lieut. Wm. Bainbridge.

Early in February Truxtun left Basseterre, St. Kitts, in his flagship, and ran down toward Nevis. His executive officer, Lieut. John Rodgers has left a detailed account of their meeting with and capture of the famous French frigate *Insurgente*, "mounting 40 guns and 8 swivels, with 411 men."

"Though I am not in the habit of boasting," concludes the report, "yet I candidly tell you I should feel happy with the same officers and same men on going alongside of the best 50-gun ship the all-conquering French Republic have—at any hour."

The action lasted one hour and a quarter, during which the *Insurgente* lost seventy men, of whom twenty-nine were killed, and the others wounded. The *Constellation* had four men wounded, one of whom died of his wounds.

Lieut. John Rodgers was given command of the *Insurgente*, from which he was detached in June, 1799, when he received the following letter from the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Stoddert: "I do myself the honor to enclose your commission as captain of the navy service of the United States. It is the President's desire that you take command of the *Maryland* at Baltimore, etc., etc."

Rodgers' sailing orders were dated September 5th, 1799, and read in part: "The moment the *Maryland* is ready for sea . . . you will please to proceed to Surinam where you will join Captain McNeill of the *Portsmouth*. . . . Your object must be to give all possible security to our trade by capturing the enemy's vessels wherever to be found on the high seas. . . ."

The Surinam station lay along the north coast of South America



LA FAYETTE

After a Painting by Scheffer, 1824





and extended from French Guiana to the Dutch island of Curaçoa.

On September 13th Rodgers sailed from Baltimore and arrived on his station early in October. His duty was convoying American ships and clearing the seas of French privateers. One year later he re-entered the Chesapeake, and spent the winter of 1800- or at Baltimore, refitting his ship.

On September 30, 1800, a treaty between France and the United States was signed at Paris; and on February 18, 1801, the Senate, after amending, ratified it. These amendments rendered necessary another ratification by the French government. President Adams chose Rodgers and the *Maryland* to make the voyage to France with the treaty, and President Jefferson selected Mr. John Dawson, a Congressman from Virginia, to serve as the official bearer of the document.

The Captain's sailing orders were dated March 21, 1801, and the *Maryland* arrived at her home port again the following August.

Rodgers was now twenty-eight years old. For more than two years he had been a captain, the highest naval rank then known. As executive officer of the *Constellation*, he had participated in one of the two frigate fights of the war, and had with the other officers of his vessel received the thanks of the President and the Secretary of the Navy. For several months he commanded the *Insurgente*, the principal prize of the war, and one of our largest frigates. For the larger part of a year he commanded the *Maryland* and the Surinam station. Lastly, he had the honor to be chosen to convey to France the bearer of the new French-American treaty, a mission that he performed to the entire satisfaction of the Government.

Scarcely were our difficulties with France settled than we began a war with Tripoli; and our naval activities shifted from the West Indies to the Mediterranean, where, in 1784, the Barbary



corsairs commenced capturing our merchantmen. For hundreds of years the Barbary States of Northern Africa had been an intolerable nuisance among nations. Swarming over the Mediterranean, their pirates robbed the ships of Christian nations, murdering their crews or holding them for ransom. Instead of wiping these miscreants from the face of the earth, as any one of the leading powers could have done, they paid tribute or blackmail to the swarthy wretches on condition that they would not harm the vessels of Christian countries when they ventured upon the Mediterranean. Hardly had the United States won its independence than it joined the other nations in buying protection from the Barbary States. The Pacha of Tripoli, finding he was receiving less tribute than he thought he should receive, wrote President Adams a menacing letter, and ordered the flagstaff at the American consulate to be cut down; whereupon our consul, James L. Cathcart, left the Pacha's dominions, and we were at war with Tripoli. This was in May, 1801.

The government at Washington immediately fitted out a squadron of four ships, under Commodore Richard Dale, who arrived at Gibraltar on July 1, 1801, and proceeded up the Mediterranean. The most notable event of his cruise was the gallant capture by the U. S. S. *Enterprise*, Lieut. Andrew Sterrett, of a Tripolitan vessel of 14 guns, in which action the Americans did not lose a man.

In 1802, John Rodgers, in command of the *John Adams*, joined the Mediterranean Squadron, and received orders in May, 1803, to "proceed to Tripoli, and cruise off that port . . . until the Pacha should make an offer of peace." On the 12th he captured the Tripolitan cruiser *Meshouda*, as she was entering the harbor with a load of naval and military stores, and took his prize to Malta where he arrived on May 19th.

In the spring of 1804, Rodgers was ordered to command the

frigate *Congress*. "Anticipating his return to the Mediterranean he was extending his knowledge of the classic lands of antiquity by reading Virgil"; he also at that time procured a midshipman's warrant for his youngest brother, George Washington Rodgers, then a lad of seventeen years. The *Congress* was equipping in Washington, and when about the 1st of June Rodgers dropped down to Hampton Roads, he wrote to an employee of the Washington Yard who had failed to equip the frigate with certain necessary articles: "It is to your interest to pray that my head may be knocked off before I return, for be assured if you are not punished before that period I will revenge the injury you have done me with my own hands."

The *Congress* sailed on July 5th, for Tripoli, with the other vessels of Commodore Barron's squadron, but shortly after their arrival there Barron fell gravely ill, and turned over the command of the blockading squadron to Rodgers. On November 1st, Rodgers transferred his flag to the *Constitution*, which was for several years his sea home. Under his command there were seventeen vessels, the largest fleet of the American Navy that had ever gone to sea, and under the mouths of his cannon he conducted successful negotiations with the rulers of the country, bringing the wars with the Barbary corsairs to an end in 1806. To Commodore John Rodgers must always be given a conspicuous and honorable place in the history of our wars with the Barbary States.

From 1809-12, he commanded the home squadron, with orders to cruise along the coast to prevent impressment of American seamen by British cruisers. On May 16, 1811, a shot was fired at Rodgers' flagship, the *President*, by a strange sail, which proved to be the British ship *Little Belt*. Several broadsides were exchanged by both ships, and as we were not then at war with Great Britain the event widened the breach between the two

countries. Commodore Rodgers was, however, acquitted of blame by a court.

In June, 1812, he sailed in the *President*, in command of a squadron to intercept the British West India Squadron, and on June 23rd, met the British frigate *Belvidera*, which escaped after a running fight of eight hours.

Commodore Rodgers made four cruises in the *President*, capturing 12 vessels, including the *Highflyer*, September 23, 1813. His prizes numbered 23 in all.

After the war of 1812, he declined the office of Secretary of the Navy, but was appointed president of the Board of Naval Commissioners, which office he held from 1815 to 1837, except during the years 1825-27, when he commanded the Mediterranean Squadron.

A letter from Commodore John Rodgers to Mr. Southard, Secretary of the Navy, dated "U. S. S. *North Carolina*, Port Mahon, 20th Dec. 1825," reads in part: "I have to inform you that the ships the *Brandywine*, *Constitution*, and *Erie* arrived on the 28th, (Nov.) after a passage of twelve days from Gibraltar. The Governor and others . . . appear disposed to be very courteous and friendly. The harbor is certainly the finest I ever was in—" these words would recall the couplet of Andrea Doria:

"Junio, Julio, Agosto, y puerto Mahon  
Los mejores puertos del Mediterraneo."

"June, July, August, and Port Mahon are the best harbors of the Mediterranean."

"It has been found necessary," continues the report, "to caulk the *Brandywine* nearly all over. . . .

"A Dutch Brig of war arrived here a few days since direct from Smyrna, the Comdr. of which vessel reports piracies to have become very frequent of late in that sea. . . . The officers

and crew of the squadron are in good health, and as the ships will all be in complete readiness for sea in less than a month it is not unlikely that I shall leave here sooner than at first contemplated, in which event I shall probably visit Messina before I proceed up the Mediterranean, which is my intention to do earlier the ensuing spring than I was able to do the last.

"From the kind reception the Squadron met with last summer in such parts towards the head of the Mediterranean as our ships had not been in the habit of frequenting, I am led to believe that showing them occasionally where we are least known would have a good effect; for on our last visit to Smyrna even the Turkish women, altho' veiled and guarded by Eunuchs, were tempted on several occasions to visit the ships of the New World, as they called them; I mention this because it was said the like had never been permitted before. In their visits they looked at everything and everybody on board but spoke to none. Their persons were so completely enveloped by the kind of dress they wore that nothing but thir eyes could be seen, and even them not very distinctly. . . . "

That the fleet did not leave Port Mahon as early as anticipated is witnessed by the fact that in February, 1826, the schooner *Porpoise* joined the squadron there, bringing orders for the return of the *Brandywine* to the United States, to be fitted out for a cruise in the Pacific.

"I have,"—writes Commodore Rodgers, in a report dated Port Mahon, February 25, 1826,—“at the request of some of the officers of the *Brandywine* who did not wish to return, permitted an exchange of situations with others of similar grade who did, and which I hope you will approve;” and referring to the log of the *Constitution*, we find that on February 21, 1826, “the following joined her from the *Brandywine*: Midshipmen Hansford, Hoff, Bache, Page, Brent, Deacon, Radford.”



On February 26th the *Brandywine* sailed for the United States; and on April 11th, the *Constitution*, under Captain Daniel T. Patterson, sailed, in company with the rest of the fleet, for Gibraltar, whence, after visiting Algiers and Tunis, they headed for the eastern end of the Mediterranean.

Captain—later Commodore—Daniel Tod Patterson was born on Long Island, N. Y., March 6, 1786, entered U. S. Navy as midshipman, August, 1800, and was attached to the frigate *Philadelphia*, under Capt. Wm. Bainbridge, when she ran upon a reef off Tripoli and was taken by a flotilla of Tripolitan gunboats. Patterson was kept a prisoner with the other officers and men of the *Philadelphia* until 1805. In 1807 he was promoted to lieutenant, and in 1813 was made a commander. In 1814 he had charge of the naval forces at New Orleans, co-operating ably with General Andrew Jackson, and receiving the thanks of Congress.

Attaining the rank of captain he was given in 1825 command of the *Constitution*, succeeding Capt. Thomas Macdonough, who was ill and who died on his way back to the United States.

Commodore Daniel Patterson's sons were Rear Admiral Harmon Patterson, U. S. N., and Mr. Carlisle Patterson, Head of the United States Coast Survey; his daughter became Mrs. D. D. Porter.

Many were the anecdotes my father used to tell of those early days at Port Mahon, which was then considered a midshipmens' paradise; and adverse elements alone prevented us, his family, from visiting, in later years, this spot which always retained so bright a hold upon his memory. One story there was in particular, which, as children, always amused us greatly.

Commodore Rodgers was, as may well be imagined, a strict disciplinarian of the old school, and from all accounts he was held in very respectful awe by those youngsters of former days.



His habit was, when meeting a midshipman strolling about the streets of Mahon to order him to "fall in," and follow him about the town until the time of his leave had expired. In consequence of this the midshipmen never dared, when on shore, turn a corner without first peeping furtively around to see that they ran no risk of coming face to face with their redoubtable Commander-in-Chief.

The log of the flagship *North Carolina* for the years 1826-27 throws much light on the employment of officers and crew on a line-of-battle ship in the old Navy. Beside the ever continuous "gun practice,"—what, I wonder, would have been thought then of the monster weapons of today?—there was the reefing and furling of sails, the making of signals, and the cleaning and repairing of the ship, while the holystone and paint-pot played the same rôle then as now. Courts-martial were held, salutes fired, visits of ceremony exchanged, and orders for placing the ship in mourning issued.

In November, 1826, funeral honors were paid to ex-Presidents Jefferson and Adams—who, by a singular coincidence, had departed this life upon the same day—"by hoisting the flag at half mast, firing minute guns, cock-billing the yards, wearing crape and painting black various parts of the ship."

Commodore Rodgers, during his command, greatly improved the moral tone of the squadron. He forbade duelling, criticism of superiors, the wearing of civilian dress ashore; he likewise forbade the midshipmen lending money to each other or becoming indebted to tradesmen, while all gambling, either public or private, was absolutely prohibited.

An incident which is said to have occurred on board one of Rodgers' vessels while cruising in the Archipelago in the summer of 1826 may be quoted as illustrative of the discipline maintained in the old Navy. The story is narrated by one of the officers of

the vessel: "A short time since one of our Lieutenants accidentally heard one of the crew whistling on the quarter-deck. 'Mount that capstan,' said he, 'and whistle until I order you to stop.'

" 'Aye, aye, sir,' was the ready reply. Whereupon the sailor seated himself upon it, and whistled away for a long time, got wearied, made many a wry face, cursed his bad luck, and whistled again. Some six hours passed and the poor fellow's mouth had assumed rather an odd shape, for whistle he could not, and at length gradually extending his jaws, he asked for a drink of water, and dryly exclaimed: 'I'm d——d if I ain't tired of whistling.' The officer of the deck then gave him permission to come down."

On June 28, 1826, the fleet rendezvoused at Vourla, 20 miles from Smyrna, and there received news of the revolt of the Janissaries, which had taken place at Constantinople on June 15th. These Turkish Janissaries dated from the year 1360, when Sultan Amurath I formed for himself a bodyguard of Christian captives, which force, highly privileged, soon swelled to large dimensions, and from being the Sultan's slaves, became his masters. When, in 1826, Mahmoud II started the reorganization of his army, the Janissaries rose against him, but, as a body, were annihilated by the new troops who proved faithful. Such, in brief, is the history of the Janissaries, the earliest standing army in Europe.

From Vourla, Commodore Rodgers reports on July 18th: "Since I wrote you last . . . I have had the gratification to show the squadron and display the flag of the United States at the entrance of the Dardanelles.

"On the 30th ultimo I left here with this ship," (*North Carolina*), "the *Constitution*, *Ontario* and *Porpoise* for the Island of Tenedos, at which place we anchored on the second instant.

Soon after anchoring the Governor of the Island paid me a visit and informed me that the Capudan Pacha with his whole fleet then lay at the Dardanelles. I informed him that I was desirous of seeing the Turkish fleet and of communicating with the Capudan Pacha, and therefore wished to know when the fleet would be out. He replied that the fleet would sail in 10 or 12 days. You will be surprised when I tell you that he now asked me what country our flag represented? I told him that it was the flag of the United States of America. He said that neither himself nor any other person on the Island had ever seen such a flag before.

"He offered to furnish guides if the officers of the squadron wished to visit the plains of Troy and the tombs of Ajax and Achilles, which form one side of the Straits in which the squadron then lay, and other interesting relics in sight. I accepted his offer, and a guide was accordingly sent the next day when the officers commenced and were allowed by turns as their duties would permit to explore the country from the entrance of the Dardanelles to *Eske Stamboul*." (Ancient Constantinople.)

These reports give us a mental picture of the activities of the officers of the fleet at that time, and enable us to realize, at least in part, how Midshipman William Radford was then employed.

On July 4th, a division of the Turkish fleet, 23 sail in all, appeared coming out of the Dardanelles.

A fresh gale was blowing, and one of the frigates ran on a rock between Tenedos and the plains of Troy, breaking off her rudder. So serious was the damage that the Capudan Pacha came himself to Tenedos to investigate the matter.

Having arrived there he sent a lieutenant, accompanied by a dragoman, to present his compliments to Commodore Rodgers, to say how happy he felt to see the American squadron, and also to inform the Commodore that he would be glad to see him on shore the next day at whatever hour would suit his convenience.

This matter having been settled the Commodore expressed his regrets that the frigate should have met with so serious an accident, to which the lieutenant replied that he also regretted the matter as the Capudan Pacha was greatly incensed against the frigate's captain, and would undoubtedly *cut off his head* unless, during the next day's meeting, the Commodore should intercede for him.

This, in taking leave the following day of the Capudan Pacha, Commodore Rodgers accordingly did, when he was informed that the punishment would be remitted provided the Commodore himself would "give the man a good beating." Protesting indignantly at the suggestion the Commodore and his Staff took their departure without having obtained satisfaction in regard to the matter; but learned the next morning that the disabled frigate had sailed under the command of the same captain.

On July 9th, Commodore Rodgers having afforded the officers under his command an opportunity of visiting the plains of Troy and adjacent country, the squadron got under way, and "beat up against a head wind and strong current to the entrance to the Dardanelles, so near as to afford a minute view of the batteries on either side of its entrance."

This unlooked-for appearance of the American fleet created quite an alarm; the guns of the batteries were hastily manned, and an express sent off to the Capudan Pacha at the Hellespont.

The Capudan Pacha, to whom Commodore Rodgers had communicated his intention of looking into the Dardanelles with the squadron, laughed very heartily at the account of "the large ships and strange flag which were then to be seen at the Dardanelles."

"After all on board the squadron," writes Commodore Rodgers, "had been gratified with a sight of this singular strait that communicates with the Black Sea, the signal was made and



we bore away for Mytilene. The atmosphere at the time was singularly serene, and . . . the prospect from our decks was peculiarly sublime and interesting, for just before sunset the following objects, which have been the themes of so much history, poetry and song, presented themselves to view. The entrance to the Dardanelles, as well as that to the river Scamander; the islands of Tenedos, Imbros, Samothrace and Lemnos; Mount Ida, Mount Athos and Mount Olympus; the tombs of Ajax and Achilles, and Cape Baba were distinctly to be seen from the decks."

A wonderful education was this for Midshipman Radford, who was learning the great lesson of life under strangely fascinating conditions.

On July 11th, the fleet anchored before the town of Mytilene, and the Commodore went ashore accompanied by the captains of the different vessels of his squadron to call upon the Governor, who returned the visit on the following day. Noting, upon the latter occasion, in the cabin of the *North Carolina*, a globe of the world, the Governor asked Mr. Offley, U. S. Consul to Smyrna, who was acting as interpreter, to point out to him just where the United States was situated. It so happened that the globe was turned in such a fashion that America lay on the under side, seeing which the wily Turk with an astute smile, remarked: "It's all right as long as Turkey is on top;" but his complacency was somewhat ruffled when Mr. Offley casually tipped the globe so that Turkey was completely lost to view.

On July 14th, the Capudan Pacha's fleet, consisting of 2 ships of the line, 7 frigates, 7 corvettes, and 16 brigs and schooners, made its appearance at Mytilene. The ship bearing the flag of the Capudan Pacha anchored first, at 8 A.M. and as it did so the *North Carolina* fired a salute of 21 guns which was immediately returned by the same number. At 3 P.M. the following day the



Capudan Pacha went on board the *North Carolina* "in a splendid barge, rowing twenty oars, and was received with the attention due to the rank of the third personage of the Ottoman Empire. He remained on board for two hours, visited every part of the ship and left with many expressions of friendship and respect for the American Nation. As he left the yards were manned—the men dressed in white—and a salute of 21 guns fired."

On July 18th, "the squadron got under way and ran down through the Turkish fleet; each ship on coming abreast of the flag of the Capudan Pacha manned her rigging and gave him three cheers, the band at the same time playing 'Hail Columbia.'"

"The exhibition of the squadron on this occasion must have been very imposing," writes Commodore Rodgers to the Hon. Samuel L. Southard, "inasmuch as the several evolutions of getting under way, of making sail, of tacking, of bearing up, of manning the rigging, and of putting the ship under a crowd of sail in a moment as it were, were performed each with a celerity and precision such as I have never before witnessed, and will, without doubt, leave a lasting impression on the minds of every Turk who witnessed the scene.

"Every mark of respect I thought it necessary to tender the Capudan Pacha for his polite attentions to me, and the uniform protection which he is known to have afforded to our commerce in these seas for several years past being now rendered, I shaped my course for this place (Vourla) where I arrived the next morning at 8 o'clock. . . . Capudan Pacha in the polity of the Turks signifies the Turkish High Admiral. He is invested with the same power at sea that the Vizier has on shore."

Truly indeed have the Turks deteriorated since those days.

Throughout the summer of 1826 the squadron remained at the

eastern end of the Mediterranean. In November the *Constitution* was laid up at Port Mahon for repairs, and there she spent the winter.

From Gibraltar Rodgers reports during that time: "Although the vessels of every other nation have suffered more or less by the depredations of the Greek pirates infesting the Archipelago, no American up to this time has been molested."

Expecting to sail for the United States sometime during the month of May, 1827, Commodore Rodgers writes, on November 26, 1826, to the Secretary of the Navy: "Captain Patterson is a sensible, well informed, discreet officer, and should none senior to him arrive before my departure entire confidence may be placed in his keeping up the discipline of the service, etc."

Another report from the Commander-in-Chief to the Secretary of the Navy, dated "Toulon, Dec. 21st, 1826," reads in part: "The *Constitution* I shall send into the Levant early in March. . . . It is currently reported here that England, France, Russia, Austria and Prussia have united in a determination to put an end to the war between the Porte and her revolted Greek subjects."

In the log of the *Constitution* we read under the date of March 30, 1827, "At 6 weighed, and stood out under top sails, jib and spanker. Saluted the Commodore with 13 guns which was answered with 7. At 6.30 hove to and discharged pilot. At 6.40 filled away and made all necessary sail. At 8 Cape Mole, the Western extremity of Minorca."

This salute of 13 guns was the *Constitution's* farewell to Commodore Rodgers, who sailed in May for the United States; while the following extract from a letter from Captain Patterson—who succeeded Rodgers in command of the fleet—shows that he had kept to the eastern end of the Mediterranean throughout the spring and summer of 1827.

"U. S. Ship *Constitution*,

Smyrna, Sept. 22nd, 1827.

"I arrived in this sea very early in April. Have spent a portion of the summer on the coast of Greece and among the Islands, seen much of the people and visited many places of great interest and attraction, such as Athens, Megara, Corinth, Salamis, Spezzia, Napoli di Romana, and have mixed personally with people of every class and condition and lament to say that the result is not as favorable as the friends of Greece might reasonably expect. . . . But amidst all the dangers they are beset with, be it to their honor recorded, the word 'submission' never issued from their lips, nor have I heard of an instance where they have, upon being summoned, laid down their arms. Such a people may be exterminated but cannot be subdued. . . .

"I first anchored in Salamis Road (scene of Themistocles' triumph) in May last, from Ephesus, shortly after the disastrous defeat they suffered at Athens, when the most numerous and effective army they had ever collected together was almost annihilated.

"Unhappily for Greece and the noble—I might say Holy—cause for which she is contending, she is distracted by internal dissensions, distrust, sectional jealousies and animosities, paralyzing her every effort and those of her best friends and supporters."

Strange indeed how history repeats itself!

"I have witnessed," continues Captain Patterson, "such scenes of human wretchedness and misery arising from want of food as no language can depict, and which would draw tears of compassion from the most hardened, even, I believe from a Turk. . . ."

"This ship," concludes the report, "will I hope return to the United States next spring and not before, for I assure you

she is not in a state, either in hull or sails, to encounter a winter passage.

“I have the honor to be,

“Very Respectfully, Your Ob’t Serv’t

“Dan’l T. Patterson.”

“To the Hon’ble  
Sam’l L. Southard,  
Sec. of the Navy.”

The only record of those days preserved to us in Midshipman William Radford’s own handwriting is the following copy of an official paper addressed by him to the Secretary of the Navy.

“U. S. Frigate *Constitution*,

“Mahon, January 8, 1828,

“Sir,

“I herewith acknowledge the receipt of my Warrant as a Midshipman in the Navy of the United States,

“I have the honor to be

“with the highest respect

“Your Obt. servant,

“William Radford.”

“Hon’ble Samuel L. Southard,  
“Secretary of the Navy.”

As his commission dated from March 1, 1825, it appears strange that the above should only have reached him at that time.

The wish expressed in the concluding sentence of Captain Patterson’s report was respected by the powers at Washington and the *Constitution* remained at her station in the Mediterranean until the summer of 1828, when she returned to the United States, and went out of commission on July 19th, at the Boston Navy Yard.



Commodore John Rodgers left one son, Robert S., a Colonel in the Civil War, father of the late Rear Admiral Frederick Rodgers, and of Rear Admiral John A. Rodgers; and two daughters; Louisa, the wife of Montgomery C. Meigs, Quarter Master General U. S. A., and Ann, the wife of John Navarre Macomb, Colonel U. S. Engineers, father of Montgomery Meigs Macomb, Brigadier General U. S. A.



## CHAPTER V

### “ OLD IRONSIDES ”

A SKETCH of the fighting career of the *Constitution*, one of the most famous ships of our old Navy, will surely interest lovers of naval history.

At the time when she was built, three classes of ships formed the bulk of most navies,—sloops, frigates, and line-of-battle ships. They usually carried three masts with square sails, and were distinguished by the number of decks having complete batteries. The *Levant*, captured by the *Constitution* in 1815, was a typical sloop. She had, on a single deck, eighteen 32-pound carronades, two long 9-pounders, and one shifting 12-pounder. This battery is characteristic, and indicates the usual armament of the sloop.

The frigate was always ship-rigged, and carried guns on two decks, the main or gun-deck having a complete battery, and the upper or spar-deck having guns only on the forward and after parts. The waists seldom mounted any guns.

Line-of-battle ships, as their name indicates, were intended to take the shock of battle between fleets. They carried guns on three or more decks. Two of these decks had full batteries, usually of thirty long guns, and carronades were placed on the quarter-deck and the forecastle. The smallest line-of-battle ship was so vastly superior to an ordinary frigate that a captain in command of the latter was entirely justified in declining an action with the former.

During the war of 1812, the British had no regulated sights

for their guns, and they suffered by comparison with the Americans, who were clever enough to provide fair substitutes for the modern sight-bar. In some cases tubes were placed along the tops of the guns, with adjustments for various elevations or distances. The height of the decks above water-level also had an important bearing upon the fighting qualities of a ship. Other things being equal, the vessel with the higher decks had the advantage in a rough sea.

Early in 1794, when a need for armed vessels to protect our commerce from the depredations of the Barbary corsairs had arisen, Congress authorized the construction of six frigates, the *Constitution*, *United States*, *President*, *Constellation*, *Congress*, and *Chesapeake*.

In 1796, when our relations with the Barbary States became more peaceful, the building of the six frigates was partly suspended, but in 1797-98, the threatening aspect of our affairs with France caused it to be resumed and prosecuted with vigor. In June, 1798, the Navy Department was organized, with Benjamin Stoddert of Georgetown, D. C., as Naval Secretary.

In the spring of that year an irregular and desultory naval war between the United States and France broke out and continued until February, 1801. This quasi-conflict led to a large increase of the Navy, which at its maximum strength consisted of fifty vessels, seven hundred and fifty officers, and fifty-five hundred seamen. In July, 1797, Congress made an appropriation for completing three frigates, the *Constitution*, the *United States*, and the *Constellation*, for which Mr. Joshua Humphreys, a well-known shipbuilder of Philadelphia, prepared the models. The *Constitution*, a 44-gun frigate, was built in Boston, and launched in October, 1797.

After launching her the government did not proceed with much diligence to fit her out, and the summer arrived before the *Con-*

*stitution* got fairly away. Four squadrons were then forming to patrol the coast and the West Indies, where French privateers had wrought great havoc upon our merchant shipping.

The *Constitution*, under Capt. Samuel Nicholson, was included in the detail for this service. She dropped down from the inner harbor of Boston to the Roads on July 2, 1798, and cleared for sea on the 22nd. The *Constitution* proved to be too large for the duties assigned to her, as the French sent no heavy armed ships to America, in consequence of the war with England and of the numerous English fleet in the West Indies. She therefore accomplished little under Captain Nicholson. The *Constellation*, a smaller frigate, was more lucky. In 1799, Captain Nicholson returned to Boston and gave up his command to Commodore Silas Talbot, who, with Isaac Hull as first lieutenant, took the *Constitution* as his flagship. She carried four hundred officers and men at that time.

There were then four grades of officers: Captains, Master Commandants, Lieutenants, and Midshipmen. The senior captain in a squadron, while in command, received the title of Commodore, and flew a broad pennant at his mainmast to designate the flagship.

The term of enlistment for seamen was only one year, and ships were often much embarrassed by the necessity of getting back to port for new crews. During the war with the Barbary pirates Congress extended the period of enlistment to two years, and in 1820 this was further extended to three years.

The *Constitution* left Boston in August, 1799, under Commodore Talbot, to become the flagship on the San Domingo station. As she was very heavily built and carried guns considerably heavier than the corresponding rate in the British Navy, she was much criticised by the English in the West Indies. While cruising to windward of San Domingo, a ship was sighted which turned out

to be a British frigate commanded by an acquaintance of Commodore Talbot. The English captain went on board the *Constitution* to take a look at the craft, and after examining her he expressed great admiration for her, but declared that his own ship could beat her on the wind. He offered to bet a cask of Madeira wine against an equivalent in money if Commodore Talbot would meet him thereabouts later for a trial of speed. The agreement was made, and the Englishman went into port to refit and clean the bottom of his ship. He came out at the appointed time, looking, as Jack Tar said, like a new fiddle. The two commanders dined together, and arranged the conditions of the race for the succeeding day. The ships kept near each other during the night, and Isaac Hull, who had charge of all details on the *Constitution*, made every preparation for the race, which began at dawn upon the firing of a gun. All day long the two ships beat to windward in short tacks, Hull watching every possible opportunity and advantage. His skill in handling the ship on this occasion gained him a lasting reputation among the sailors, who were kept on deck moving from side to side whenever a better slant of wind could be obtained thereby. When the gun was fired at sunset the Englishman was hull down to leeward. The *Constitution* accordingly squared away before the wind and joined him after dark. A boat was waiting, and the English captain came on board, like a true sportsman, with his cask of Madeira.

The relations between American and English ships did not lack cordiality at that period, in spite of the growing irritation over the impressment of our seamen.

Having heard that the *Sandwich*, a French letter of marque, was in the harbor of Porto Plata, on the north side of San Domingo, loading with coffee, Commodore Talbot determined to cut her out. Isaac Hull was directed, on the 10th of May, 1800,



to take a detachment of sailors and marines from the *Constitution* for this duty, and to bring the *Sandwich* out if practicable. The work was admirably done in broad daylight. The ship, after capture, had to be rigged before they could move her; but nothing daunted the American sailors, and she sailed out at sunset.

Upon the return of the *Constitution* to Boston in August, 1800, the Secretary of the Navy wrote a very glowing tribute to Commodore Talbot for his meritorious services in "protecting with effect a great proportion of our commerce, in laying the foundation of a permanent trade with San Domingo, and in causing the American character to be respected."

By act of Congress, March 3, 1801, the Navy was reduced to a peace footing. The crew of the *Constitution* was paid off, and the ship dismantled at the Boston Navy Yard, where she lay from March, 1801, to August, 1803. On the 14th of that month she sailed for the Mediterranean under the command of Edward Preble, to serve as flagship on the blockade which broke the power of the corsair. She carried out as passengers Colonel Tobias Lear, Consul General of the United States to the Barbary States, and his wife.

Edward Preble was born at Portland, Me., in 1761. In 1779 his father obtained a midshipman's warrant for him in the Massachusetts' State Marine, and he went to sea on the *Protector*, a 26-gun ship commanded by J. F. Williams. He was in two actions with the British, and was taken prisoner and sent to New York, where a friend of his father's secured his release. He promptly joined the *Winthrop*, as first lieutenant, and distinguished himself greatly in a successful cutting-out expedition under the guns of Castine.

He subsequently spent fifteen years in the merchant service and saw much of the world. He received a commission as lieutenant

in the Navy, in April, 1798. Promoted to captain in June, 1799, he was placed in command of the *Essex*. In May, 1803, he was detailed to get the *Constitution* ready for service in the Mediterranean. He was one of the best of our early seamen, and as an officer earned the good will of all who served under him.

The *Constitution* reached Gibraltar on September 12, 1803, just twenty-nine days from Boston.

The following incident of the voyage out is related by Morris who was then serving as a midshipman on board.

"We had nothing of interest on the passage until near the entrance of the Straits of Gibraltar, when, upon a very dark evening, with very light winds, we suddenly found ourselves near a vessel which was evidently a ship of war. The crew were immediately but silently brought to quarters, after which the Commodore gave the usual hail: 'What ship is that?' The same question was returned; in reply to which the name of our ship was given, and the question repeated. Again the question was returned instead of an answer, and again our ship's name given and the question repeated, without other reply than its repetition. The Commodore's patience seemed now exhausted, and, taking the trumpet, he hailed and said, 'I am now going to hail you for the last time. If a proper answer is not returned, I will fire a shot into you.' A prompt answer came back, 'If you fire a shot, I will return a broadside.' Preble then hailed, 'What ships is that?' The reply was, 'This is His Britannic Majesty's ship *Donegal*, eighty-four guns, Sir Richard Strahan, an English Commodore. Send your boat on board.' Under the excitement of the moment, Preble leaped on the hammocks, and returned for answer, 'This is the United States ship *Constitution*, forty-four guns, Edward Preble, an American Commodore, who will be damned before he sends his boat on board of any vessel.' And, turning to the crew, he said, 'Blow your matches, boys.' The

conversation here ceased, and soon after a boat was heard coming from the stranger, and arrived with a lieutenant from the frigate *Maidstone*. The object of this officer was to apologize for the apparent rudeness which had been displayed. He stated that our ship had not been seen until we had hailed them; that it was, of course, very important to gain time to bring their men to quarters, especially as it was apparent we were not English, and they had no expectation of meeting an American ship of war there; and that this object had induced their delay and misrepresentation in giving the ship's name. The excuses were deemed satisfactory, and the ships separated. This was the first occasion that had offered to show us what we might expect from our commander, and the spirit and decision which he displayed were hailed with pleasure by all, and at once mitigated greatly the unfriendly feelings which the exhibitions of his temper had produced."

His subordinates on this voyage had at first disliked him, but with time, had discovered beneath a violent temper kindness and justice; and though his discipline was rigid, applications to serve under him were always numerous.

Before going into the Mediterranean, Preble found it advisable to secure the Straits for the free entrance of American ships. There was good ground for believing that the Emperor of Morocco had broken the treaty signed by his father, as the *Philadelphia* on her way to Gibraltar had run across the Moorish ship *Mirboka* in possession of an American merchantman. Captain Bainbridge had taken them both into Gibraltar, where another cruiser, the *Meshouda*, was held by the squadron. She had been captured while trying to run the blockade of Tripoli, by the *John Adams*, under John Rodgers.

Preble accordingly sent the *Philadelphia* and the *Vixen* (Capt. John Smith), to establish once more the blockade of Tripoli, and he then crossed over to Tangier in the *Constitution*, accom-

panied by the *Nautilus* (Capt. Richard Somers), and the *John Adams*, whose commander had generously waived his seniority over Preble for the good of the cause.

Soon after Bainbridge arrived off the harbor of Tripoli, he sent the *Vixen* in search of a cruiser that had come out a few days before, and was thus left to maintain the dangerous blockade alone with a ship entirely too deep for inshore work. A gale of wind swept him to the eastward, and, on October 31st, while returning before a fair breeze, he sighted a large xebec standing into Tripoli. With his usual impetuosity, he chased her close in shore within three miles of the town, but she escaped. In hauling off, the *Philadelphia* ran on a shelving rock, the position of which was not known to the Americans, and her bow was lifted from three to four feet by the force of the blow. The yards were braced aback, and the guns were run aft, where the water was deeper, in the attempt to get her off. Nine of the enemy's gunboats came out at once, and Captain Bainbridge hastened to have the forward guns and the anchors thrown overboard, but it was in vain; the case was hopeless. The gunboats had obtained a position from which they could fire upon the ship without a return fire, and there was nothing for the Americans to do but to surrender. They made one last effort by pumping out the fresh water, throwing overboard all heavy articles and cutting away the foremast. Still the ship stuck hard and fast on the reef. Captain Bainbridge then flooded the magazines, scuttled the ship, and hauled down the flag to save the lives of his crew. Thus 22 officers and 293 men became prisoners of the Dey, and the *Philadelphia* was added to his possessions a few days later, as a north-west gale piled up the sea around the rock, enabling the Tripolitans to get her into a position from which she could be easily floated.

The loss of this ship had a baneful effect upon the war. Preble



might well feel distressed and embarrassed at the very outset of his mission. He never showed any lack of confidence in Bainbridge, however, and throughout his captivity managed to send him a number of generous and sympathetic letters.

Captain Bainbridge has always been held blameless for an accident that was bitterly expiated in eighteen months' captivity under horrible conditions. There was no survey at that time, and he had no means of knowing the coast.

Although the war with Tripoli was carried on mainly by the smaller ships, every expedition was planned on the *Constitution*, which was kept incessantly active.

On the night of February 16th, the *Philadelphia* (as has been mentioned in Chapter II), was burned in the harbor of Tripoli by American sailors under Decatur. This expedition had been planned early in December by Preble, who had received letters from Bainbridge, through the Danish Consul, Mr. Nicholas Nissen, suggesting that the ship should be destroyed. (This suggestion was written in sympathetic ink.) Decatur had volunteered to go in with his own ship, the *Enterprise*, and capture her by boarding, and Stewart had offered to cut her out with the *Siren*, but Preble substituted the Tripolitan ketch *Mastico*, that had been captured by the *Enterprise*, and which by reason of her general appearance was admirably adapted for the purpose. After fitting her out for this expedition at Syracuse she was rechristened *Intrepid*.

In this wretched boat, rigged for sixteen oars, and hardly larger than a fair-sized sailing yacht, seventy-four men reached the coast four days later, convoyed by the brig *Siren* under the command of Charles Stewart, and headed for a passage through the rocks to the inner harbor.

She arrived in sight of the town on the afternoon of the 6th, and anchored off the entrance at nightfall; but a sudden and vio-

lent gale swept her to the eastward, and both she and the *Siren* had to ride out at sea a terrific storm that lasted six days and nights. At times it was feared that the *Intrepid* could not last through it; but the seventh day found both vessels near the harbor, once more in favorable weather. The *Siren*, though well disguised, did not approach within sight of the coast during daylight, but the *Intrepid* sailed calmly for the port as if on an ordinary trading voyage. The boats of the *Siren* were to join her before going in but Decatur did not wait for them. The uncertainty of the weather forbade delay. He had made all his arrangements to burn the *Philadelphia*, and then to escape by towing or rowing the *Intrepid* out of the harbor under cover of the darkness. Every man had his allotted station and task. As soon as the frigate was taken each was to rush with combustibles to a specified place. The greater part of the crew lay hidden behind the bulwarks, as the ketch drifted slowly down in the half-darkness of a new moon to the anchorage.

It is terrible to consider what one mistake would have cost them. The *Philadelphia* had a full crew, all her guns were loaded, and she was surrounded by Tripolitan gunboats. Not one of the Americans could have escaped if the slightest suspicion had been aroused before boarding; yet they went boldly on to within a few feet of the *Philadelphia*, and, when hailed, the Maltese pilot they had with them replied that the ketch was a Maltese trader that had lost her anchors in a storm. They asked for a line and permission to tie up to the ship over night. They lay only forty yards from the port battery, and in the range of every gun at this time. While Decatur coolly sent a boat to make fast to the fore chains of the *Philadelphia*, some one of the latter's crew came out with a line from the stern, and assisted them in making fast there also. A few minutes of cautious pulling on the bow line, then a wild cry of "Americanos!" from a Turk who

was looking over the bulwarks, and the Americans were clambering up the side in a scramble to see who would be first on the frigate's deck. In a mad panic the crew were either cut down or driven into the sea. Everything worked exactly as Decatur had planned it, and within twenty minutes the ship was ablaze. His men were fairly driven back into their boat by the flames.

The return was even more perilous than the entrance, as all the forts and gunboats had taken the alarm. Their shots were falling around the *Intrepid* and dashing the spray into the faces of her men, as she swept down the harbor under sixteen long oars. The flames of the *Philadelphia*, the roaring of her guns as they went off one by one in the intense heat, the blinding flashes of the Turkish guns, and the uproar in the town, made the night one never to be forgotten; a fit ending to what Nelson pronounced "the most bold and daring act of the age." Decatur rejoined Stewart, who was waiting for him outside, and the two set sail for Syracuse.

The log of the *Constitution* has the following entry concerning this event:

"Sunday, Feby. 19th.—A.M. At 10 appeared in the offing the United States Brig *Syren* and the *Intrepid*. The wind being light we sent boats out to assist towing in. At half past 10 they passed through our squadron in triumph receiving three cheers as they passed. Lieutenant Stewart of the *Syren* and Lieutenant Decatur of the *Intrepid* waited on the Commodore and informed him they had passed into the harbor of Tripoli agreeably to his orders, burnt and totally destroyed the late United States Frigate *Philadelphia*. The business being so well planned not a man was killed or wounded on our side. The Tripolitans had 20 killed, the others made their escape by jumping overboard after the ship was afire."

Commodore Morris says in his journal that a boat with six

men joined them from the *Siren* before going in, which would account for the mention of the two ships in the log's entry.

The extraordinary activity of the *Constitution* during the spring and summer of 1804 was almost like the work of a modern steamer. She left Syracuse on the 1st of March, and had put to sea nineteen times from that or other ports by the end of July. While in Syracuse Preble made serious preparations for an attack on the ships and fortifications of Tripoli, for which port he sailed on July 14th, with his fleet, and reached the coast on the 24th.

The defenses of the Dey were very formidable. The city was walled, and the shore batteries mounted 119 guns, many of heavy caliber. In the harbor were 19 gunboats, 2 large galleys, 2 schooners and a brig, all well armed and manned. The Tripolitan force on shore and afloat numbered upwards of 25,000, to oppose the American Squadron carrying 1,061 men. Preble had in all one frigate, three brigs, three schooners, six gunboats, and two mortar-boats. The *Constitution* carried at that time thirty long 24-pounders on the gun-deck, and six long 26-pounders and some light guns on the fore-castle and quarter-deck.

The work for which the squadron had been patiently preparing during the past ten months had come at last, and they went at it with ferocious energy.

Owing to a violent gale which raged for many days they were unable to make their first attack before August 4th, on which date the whole fleet stood in to point-blank range of the batteries and shipping. The six gunboats then advanced to attack the Tripolitan gunboats, twenty-one of which had come outside in three divisions. The action began by a bomb-vessel throwing a shell into the town, and lasted about two hours, when the ships were compelled to haul off by a change of wind.

The furious charge of the small vessels upon three and a half



times their number soon undeceived the Tripolitans, who had come out in the belief that the Americans would not fight. The conflicts were like the traditional old sea-fights, hand to hand on the decks of the enemy, who fought desperately enough when boarded by the Americans, but were driven back into the harbor with severe loss in killed and wounded. Three of their gunboats were brought away with fifty-two prisoners, some of whom died of their wounds; forty-four had been killed outright before the boats were surrendered. The American vessels had suffered only slightly in killed and wounded. James Decatur, brother of Lieutenant Stephen, was treacherously killed in the act of boarding a Tripolitan that had surrendered to him. The *Constitution* fired 262 round shot, beside grape, double-head, and canister. She received some damage in her rigging and sails from the Tripolitan fire, and a 24-pound shot struck her mainmast, but the squadron came out with remarkably little injury considering the serious nature of the action and the effect accomplished.

The stubborn nature of the fighting is shown by two stories told in the footnotes of the *Naval Chronicle*. Decatur boarded a gunboat, it is said, to avenge his brother's death. He made straight for her commander, a gigantic Turk, greatly his superior in size and strength, and in the struggle which ensued broke his sword. The two seized each other in a violent scuffle, in which Decatur was thrown. The Turk drew a dagger to stab him, but he managed to get hold of a pistol which he had in the right-hand pocket of his trousers. By twisting it around and cocking it inside the pocket he succeeded in firing it and killing his antagonist. During the struggle one of the Tripolitans rushed forward to save his captain, and aimed a blow at Decatur's head, but a young man by the name of Reuben James, who had lost the use of his arms by severe wounds, threw his body forward and took the blow intended for Decatur on his own head. He

lived to receive a pension from the government thirty years later.

Lieutenant Trippe, with Midshipman Henley and nine men, boarded one of the gunboats manned by thirty-six men. Against desperate resistance he captured the boat, after having killed fourteen Tripolitans and taken twenty-two prisoners. Trippe received eleven saber wounds, but not an American was killed.

In his report Commodore Preble speaks in the highest terms of Decatur and Trippe and of all the officers and crews. Yet he was greatly disappointed at not having destroyed the whole fleet. There is a story that when Decatur came over the side, he walked joyfully up to Preble on the quarter-deck and said, "Well, Commodore, I have brought you out three of the gunboats." Preble turned on him like a flash, and, taking him by the collar replied, "Aye, sir, but why did you not bring me out more" and then stalked into his cabin. However, he sent for Decatur in a few minutes and made ample amends for his rage and injustice, and they were always warm friends afterwards.

On the evening of August 7th, as the squadron was hauling off from another attack, the *John Adams*, Captain Chauncey, appeared, just out from the United States with the news that the government had decided to send out several frigates under command of Commodore Samuel Barron, who was to supersede Preble.

Preble waited eleven days for the appearance of his successor and then concluded to make another attack, but a northeast gale forced him to stand off the coast for greater safety. After four days of buffeting in a heavy sea, the ships stood in again and anchored six miles from Tripoli.

On August 10th, the Dey indicated a disposition to treat, by permitting a white flag to be hoisted by the French Consul, but the terms offered, a ransom of \$500 for each captive and no tribute for terminating the war, were not satisfactory to Preble,

in spite of the tremendous reduction over any of the previous terms. He authorized the French Consul to offer \$100,000 in a lump sum, but this was not acceptable to the Dey.

On the 24th, the squadron bombarded the town from 2 A.M. until daylight, but little damage was done. One shell passed through the wall of the prison and struck the bed in which Captain Bainbridge was sleeping. A heap of stones and mortar fell on him, but he escaped with only slight injury.

After several days of unfavorable weather, the ships moved in on the night of the 28th, prepared for another early morning attack. Of this Preble wrote in his report to the Secretary of the Navy: “ We fired upwards of three hundred round shot, besides grape and canister, into the town, Bashaw’s Castle, and batteries. We silenced the castle and two of the batteries for some time. At a quarter past six, the gunboats being all out of shot, I hauled off, after having been three quarters of an hour in close action. A large Tunisian galliot was sunk in the mole. . . . The Tripoline galleys and gunboats lost many men and were much cut.”

Again on September 3rd, the bomb-vessels and the *Constitution* attacked the town and batteries, the action lasting about an hour in the afternoon, when the wind shifted to the northward and began increasing. The squadron was accordingly withdrawn, having disabled a number of the enemy’s galleys and gunboats, and thrown a number of shells into the batteries and town.

On the night of September 4th the disaster occurred which will always envelope the end of the *Intrepid* in melancholy mystery. Commodore Preble had been contemplating for some time the possibility of sending a fire-ship into the harbor to destroy the enemy’s shipping. Richard Somers, the Commander of the *Nautilus*, volunteered for the service, and for several days directed the preparation of the *Intrepid*. One hundred barrels of powder

were placed below her deck, upon which one hundred and fifty fixed shells were arranged. A fuse calculated to burn fifteen minutes was led aft to a box filled with combustibles. The intention was to take the ketch into the harbor on the first dark night that afforded a favorable breeze, and to explode her among the shipping. Two swift boats were carried in tow to provide for the escape of the crew, consisting of Captain Somers and four men from the *Nautilus*, with Lieutenants Henry Wadsworth and Joseph Israel, and six men from the *Constitution*. At eight o'clock, the *Intrepid* was under sail, and was last seen standing into the harbor about a musket shot from the mole; then her sails were swallowed up in the darkness. Soon afterward, the batteries, which had taken alarm, began firing in all directions from which danger might be apprehended. To those waiting outside there was but a short period of breathless suspense, then, before the *Intrepid* could possibly have reached her intended position, there was a blinding flash, followed by a frightful concussion which shook even the American ships outside and awed the batteries into silence. For one instant the mast and sails outlined in fire, were lifted into the air and then fell back into darkness. The three ships *Argus*, *Vixen*, and *Nautilus* which had accompanied the *Intrepid* to the entrance of the harbor, waited there all night, their crews listening in vain for the oars of the returning boats. These last never came back, and from that day to this the cause of the explosion has been a matter of conjecture. Commodore Preble believed that the ketch was intercepted by some gunboats which were seen lurking near the rocks at sunset. His theory was that they suddenly boarded her without suspecting her to be a fire-ship, and that Somers, preferring death to surrender and failure, put a match to the magazine. He based this belief upon the known determination of Somers and his officers neither to be taken nor to let the powder



and shot fall into the hands of the enemy, and upon the disappearance of one of the enemy's largest gunboats. Whatever happened, the name of Somers will always remain a watchword in the Navy, and a symbol of the self-renunciation and devotion which ennoble humanity.

Thus ended the war, for there were no more attacks.

On the 10th of September the frigates *President* and *Constellation* made their appearance, and Commodore Barron took command.

The relief of Commodore Preble was not intended as a reflection upon him, although it did look like ingratitude to supersede him and to give his successor four additional frigates just as he "had licked the Dey into shape for a reasonable peace." That he felt it seriously is shown by his journal, but he never made any complaint. News traveled slowly in those days; and the relief ships had been commissioned in consequence of the loss of the *Philadelphia* months before the result of the blockade was known. Congress voted Preble the nation's thanks and a gold medal, emblematic of the attacks on the town, batteries, and naval force of Tripoli, and the Secretary of the Navy wrote him a letter expressing unqualified approbation of his work.

On the 14th of September the *Constitution* proceeded to Malta, and there Preble left her, to the heartfelt regret of everybody in the squadron.

Decatur, who had been promoted to captain in recognition of his gallant exploit in destroying the *Philadelphia*, was transferred to the command of the *Constitution*, but on November 6th, he exchanged with Rodgers, who was his senior, to the *Congress*, a smaller ship. Commodore Barron being forced by illness to leave the squadron, Rodgers, on May 22nd, succeeded to the chief command, making the *Constitution* his flagship. In her cabin was drawn up a treaty by which the tribute to Tripoli ceased, peace

was declared without indemnity, and the American captives were surrendered on the payment of \$60,000. The treaty was signed on June 3, 1805, and salutes were exchanged between the *Constitution* and the batteries on shore.

In the meantime the Bey of Tunis had been threatening trouble unless certain ships which had been captured while running the blockade were forthwith returned. Commodore Rodgers therefore moved down with nearly the whole of his fleet and anchored off Tunis on August 1st. After certain dilatory negotiations lasting two weeks, Rodgers wrote the following in a letter to the Consul General: "He (the Bey) must do one of three things, by simple request, or else do all three by force. He must give the guarantee already required, or, he must give sufficient security for peace and send a minister to the United States, or he must make such alterations in the treaty as you may require, and as may satisfy you that there is confidence to be placed in what he does.

"I have only to repeat that if he does not do all that is necessary and proper, at the risk of my conduct being disapproved by my country he shall feel the vengeance of the squadron now in the bay."

This startling departure from the timid and feeble foreign policy of the United States during its first ten years produced its effect, and a treaty was signed with Tunis ending tribute forever. The active operations in the Mediterranean ended with this incident, and our merchant ships were never afterwards molested.

Commodore Rodgers returned home in May, 1806; giving up the command of the *Constitution* to Capt. Hugh G. Campbell, who kept her cruising from port to port another year.

During Jefferson's administration there was a mania for the construction of small gunboats for coast defense. Nothing could

have been more wasteful, and it should have been known from the ineffectiveness of the Tripolitan gunboats against the *Constitution* that such craft were of no use whatever in case of a blockade. About 257 vessels of this description were built, and in the war which followed a few years later they were permitted to rot well out of reach of British cruisers. Events were shaping themselves rapidly, and the time was fast approaching when the *Constitution* was in one battle to do more to give us national pride, to teach foreign respect for American arms, and to turn Congress towards correct theories of the country's defense, than an entire navy of gunboats could ever have done.

The *Constitution* arrived in Boston in the fall of 1807, but was ordered to New York, where she was dismantled for repairs and lay for nearly two years. In August, 1809, her old commander, John Rodgers, took her as his flagship in the home squadron; but a year later he transferred his flag to the *President* in the belief that she was the faster ship, and turned over the *Constitution* to Isaac Hull, who had been her first lieutenant in the race with the English frigate.

At that time there was a tendency to overload the ships with guns, and when Hull took command of the *Constitution* she carried on her gun-deck thirty long 24-pounders, on her quarter-deck sixteen 32-pounder carronades, and on her forecastle two long bow chasers and six 32-pounder carronades. She was a very wet ship when going on the wind, and rode heavily at her anchors.

The year 1810 was spent cruising on the home station. In the spring of 1811 she went to Annapolis for the purpose of conveying the new Minister to France across the Atlantic, as also money to pay the interest on the Dutch debt. Mr. Joel Barlow kept her waiting in Annapolis Roads from May until August, when he arrived on board with his wife and her sister Miss Baldwin.

They sailed on August 1st, and had a very pleasant voyage of five weeks to Cherbourg.

This port was blockaded by a strong British squadron, and there seemed to be some disposition to retard the *Constitution*, but Captain Hull refused to hearken to the British Commodore's request that he delay his entry into the harbor, explaining that the American Minister to France was on board and he felt it his duty to get into port as soon as the weather permitted.

The times were critical. British ships were everywhere, and the whole French coast was under blockade. The growing irritation which was shortly to break out into war did not promote friendliness between the sailors of the two nations.

Leaving Cherbourg September 12th, the *Constitution* proceeded to the Texel, where the specie was landed. She then returned for Mr. Russell, who was to be carried across the Channel to his new post at London. While entering Cherbourg some of the British blockading ships beat up the harbor with her thereby drawing the fire of the French batteries.

On November 11th, she sailed for Portsmouth with Mr. Russell and a number of passengers, all of whom were landed safely the next day. Captain Hull accompanied them to London for a short visit, leaving Lieut. Charles Morris in temporary command. During the captain's absence the following singular incident occurred. Very late in the evening of November 13th, a boat came alongside from the English frigate *Havannah*, and an officer informed Lieutenant Morris that a deserter from the *Constitution* had just swum off to his ship. Mr. Morris thanked him and said that the man would be sent for in the morning. But when this was done the Captain of the *Havannah* refused to give the man up without an order from the Admiral, Sir Roger Curtis. The lieutenant then waited on the admiral and made a formal demand for the deserter's surrender. The admiral informed



him that the man had claimed protection as a British subject, and said that he must therefore be retained. A few nights later Mr. Morris was awakened by the discharge of a sentry's musket and the cries of a man in the water near the ship. When taken on board he proved to be a deserter from the *Havannah*, but declared himself an American. As Mr. Morris says in his biography: "This was sufficient. A boat was immediately sent to the *Havannah* to reciprocate the politeness of the preceding evening, and the next morning we had the satisfaction of assigning the same reason and the same testimony for refusing a demand for his restitution from the captain and admiral."

Returning again to Cherbourg, Mr. Morris was sent up to Paris for despatches from Mr. Barlow to the home government. He was detained there six weeks, and we find a very interesting glimpse of Napoleon and official Paris during this time in his autobiography. He met La Fayette, Kosciusko, and many survivors of the French Revolution. Early in January he was back on board ship, and sailed for home on the 10th, anchoring off Old Point Comfort after a very stormy passage of forty days. Late in March the ship was taken to the Navy Yard at Washington for a thorough overhauling.

On June 18, 1812, war was declared against England, and three days later the *Constitution* left Washington with orders to proceed to New York and join the squadron of Commodore Rodgers. Captain Hull commanded her, and Charles Morris was again her first lieutenant. On the 25th of June she was at the mouth of the Potomac, and on the 28th at anchor off Annapolis, for greater convenience to Baltimore where men and stores could be obtained. On July 12th she passed out between the capes, and five days after putting to sea had the memorable escape from the British Squadron already described in the notes from Commodore Morris's autobiography. It was a relief to many people when the

*Constitution*, after twenty-two days at sea, anchored just outside of Boston harbor. The following notice, which was inserted in the Exchange Coffee-House books by Captain Hull, forms a fitting termination of this episode:

“Captain Hull, finding his friends in Boston are correctly informed of his situation when chased by the British squadron off New York, and that they are good enough to give him more credit by escaping them than he ought to claim, takes this opportunity of requesting them to make a transfer of a great part of their good wishes to Lt. Morris and the other brave officers, and the crew under his command, for their very great exertions and prompt attention to orders while the enemy were in chase.”

On August 2nd, Captain Hull again put to sea, and after capturing several British merchantmen, sighted a British frigate, which proved to be the *Guerrière*. Of this fight we have already spoken, and of how Lieutenant Morris, in endeavoring to pass a lashing around the *Guerrière's* bowsprit was shot through the body and fell over on the deck. When the *Constitution* wore around her bow the *Guerrière* was practically helpless, for immediately after they separated, the foremast and mainmast went by the board and left her an unmanageable wreck rolling her main-deck guns under water. Finding his case hopeless the British captain (Captain Dacres) struck his flag.

The *Guerrière* lost 15 killed and 63 wounded, as against 7 killed and 7 wounded on the American side. There was no comparison in the damage inflicted; one ship was practically destroyed, while the other was ready for another chase a few hours afterwards. The *Constitution* is said to have obtained her appellation, “Old Ironsides,” during this fight. A seaman noticed a shot strike the side and fall back into the sea, and shouted, “Hurrah, her sides are made of iron.” Finding it impossible to

tow the *Guerrière* into port, Captain Hull gave orders to burn her.

Captain Hull and his officers were received in Boston with open arms. A dinner in their honor was given at Faneuil Hall on September 5th. It must have been interminable, for seventeen toasts were drunk. Among them were the following: The American Nation. . . . Our Infant Navy. . . . The Victory we Celebrate. . . . No Entangling Alliances. . . .

Fifty thousand dollars prize money was voted by Congress for the officers and men, a gold medal commemorating the action for Captain Hull and silver medals for the other officers.

The surprise and gloom produced in England over the disaster to their arms was equaled only by the inability to explain it. When other victories followed, the despair of the British nation was pitiful. They simply could not understand that they were fighting against people of the same blood and sea traditions, who had acquired extraordinary readiness and resource by nearly two centuries of warfare against the wilderness.

On September 15th Commodore William Bainbridge hoisted his broad pennant aboard the *Constitution*, and sailed on October 27th, in company with the *Hornet*, for southern waters. During that cruise he intercepted and captured the British frigate *Java*, on her way to India carrying men for distribution in the fleet.

On January 6th the *Constitution* sailed for home, leaving the *Hornet* to watch the British sloop-of-war *Bonne Citoyenne*, bottled up in the harbor of San Salvador.

Bainbridge reached Boston on the last day of February, and he was there saluted by the cheers of his countrymen. Congress passed a vote of thanks and ordered the usual gold and silver medals to be struck off, and an additional \$50,000 appropriated for the destruction of the *Java*.

After undergoing repairs at the Boston Yard, the *Constitution* sailed on the last day of 1813, under Capt. Charles Stewart, for

a cruise to the southward and eastward. This cruise was filled with disappointment to the men, as they were constantly chasing ships only to find them American merchantmen; but they managed to capture several prizes in the West Indies on their way home. Reaching Boston in April, 1814, the *Constitution* lay there for eight and a half months, while the British blockading squadron, consisting of the 50-gun frigate *Newcastle*, the 40-gun frigate *Acasta*, and the 18-gun brig sloop *Arab*, lay outside. Finding that, on December 16th, the *Newcastle* and *Acasta* had, for some unexplained reason, proceeded to Cape Cod, Captain Stewart, taking advantage of the opportunity, put to sea on December 18th, and succeeded in getting entirely clear of the land without molestation. Eight days out, near the Bermudas, she overhauled the British merchant ship, *Lord Nelson*, parted from her convoy, in distress, and placed a prize crew on board of her. On February 8th, off the coast of Portugal, Captain Stewart spoke the bark *Julia*, fifteen days out from Cork, under Hamburg colors, and learned that peace had been signed at Ghent.

Such news did not dampen the ardor of our seamen for one more good fight, and the ship headed leisurely down the coast in search of a proper antagonist; but they were doomed to disappointment in that locality, and with extreme dejection both officers and men saw the cruise ending without an important capture. By one of those strange premonitions which sometimes come to men, Captain Stewart one morning assured them that they would meet the enemy before sunset the next day. He headed for the Madeiras once more, and to the great delight of all on board, his prediction was fulfilled.

On the afternoon of February 20, 1815, at one o'clock, a sail was sighted two points off the port bow. The *Constitution* was in latitude  $33^{\circ} 44' N$  and longitude  $14^{\circ} 39' W$ . on a course between south and southwest, with a moderate breeze from the



northeast. She immediately gave chase, and soon brought a large ship into plain view. Shortly afterwards, another sail was discovered somewhat to the westward of the first. Both were standing to the northward with their starboard tacks on board. The nearest was the British frigate-built ship *Cyane*, Capt. Gordon Thomas Falcon, and the other, the ship-sloop *Levant*, Capt. the Hon. George Douglas. At four o'clock the *Cyane* made sail before the wind to join her consort, and to enable her commander to consult with Captain Douglas, who was his senior. In the meantime the *Constitution* was bearing down upon them under studding-sails. At half-past four her main royal mast carried away, and she lost some distance while getting up a new mast. She began firing her bow guns at the *Cyane* about five o'clock, but the shot fell short. The two British ships were endeavoring to gain to windward of the *Constitution*, but, failing to do so, were forced into action within supporting distance of each other just after sunset. About six o'clock they ran up red English ensigns and formed in a line with the wind on the starboard beam, the *Levant* being two or three ship's lengths in advance. The *Constitution* hoisted her colors, and at five minutes past six invited the contest by firing a shot between the two ships. She was at that time only three hundred yards on the starboard side of the *Cyane* and slowly passing her. Broad sides were exchanged immediately, and for fifteen minutes a very hot action ensued. The sea was covered with a light mist, and the moon came out, while dense masses of smoke formed to leeward of each ship. When it finally cleared away from the *Constitution* she found herself abreast of the *Levant* with the *Cyane* luffing up astern to deliver a raking broadside. Captain Stewart quickly fired a broadside into the *Levant*; then, hidden in the smoke of his own guns, braced the after sails aback and went astern enough to pour a heavy fire into the *Cyane*. As the *Levant* wore to come back to

her companion's assistance, the *Constitution's* sails were again filled; she shot ahead and fired two broadsides into the stern of the *Levant* as she was turning. Captain Falcon, seeing the extremely hazardous position of the latter, gallantly stood in between the two ships to take this fire, and Captain Douglas immediately drew out of the combat with his braces gone and his ship badly cut up. The *Cyane* now attempted to go off before the wind, but the *Constitution* wore short around and gave her a raking fire over the stern. As she luffed up and fired her port broadside, Stewart placed his ship within hail on her port quarter, where he held her practically at his mercy. Finding the case hopeless, Captain Falcon fired a gun to leeward and hoisted a light in token of surrender, just forty minutes after the first broadside had been fired. His ship was hulled a number of times between wind and water, five carronades had broken loose, much of the rigging was gone, the main and mizzen-masts were in danger of falling over the side, and many of his men were disabled.

Perceiving that the *Cyane* had struck, Captain Douglas attempted to run, but it was too late. His wheel had been shot away, and his lower masts had been badly injured. After a chase of half an hour he surrendered, and Lieutenant Ballard was sent to take possession. Lieutenant Hoffman was already on board the *Cyane* with a small crew.

This battle is noted for the splendid seamanship of the Americans and the gallant behavior of the English. Captain Stewart had succeeded, by running and backing from one ship to the other, in fighting each separately, and in preventing his own ship from being raked. There is nothing finer in our annals.

This was the last great fight of the "Old Ironsides," as it was the last frigate action of the war.



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The U. S. Frigate *Constitution*, Famous also in Naval History as "Old Ironsides"





The success of the War of 1812 cannot be credited to one frigate, yet the *Constitution* absorbed the largest amount of attention as she did by far the greatest damage to British armed ships upon the sea.

Being in need of extensive repairs, the old frigate underwent a period of enforced idleness, lasting about six years, sailing again in May, 1821, under command of Capt. Jacob Jones for service as flagship of the Mediterranean Squadron. It was during this cruise, in 1822, that Lord Byron paid her a visit.

In the fall of 1823, the *Constitution* was back in Boston for a new crew, sailing in October, 1824, under Capt. Thomas Macdonough, to join the Mediterranean Squadron, then shortly to be commanded by Commodore John Rodgers, "whose strong hand and rigid discipline would," the Secretary of the Navy was convinced, "restore the moral tone and put an end to the brawls and fighting of duels, as well as to the general dissipation then rife amongst the officers of the Mediterranean fleet."

Shortly after reaching Boston in 1828, the *Constitution* was "surveyed and reported unseaworthy" and orders were given by the Secretary of the Navy that she should be broken up and sold.

"A ship with a fighting record unequalled in the service," writes Hollis, "the *Constitution* was also said to be proverbially lucky, and so it proved on this occasion."

Seeing in a newspaper one morning that she was to be destroyed by order of the Navy Department, Oliver Wendell Holmes, who had just completed his twenty-first year, seized a pen and dashed off the following well-known lines:

"Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!  
 Long has it waved on high,  
 And many an eye has danced to see  
 That banner in the sky;

Beneath it rang the battle shout,  
And burst the cannon's roar;  
The meteor of the ocean air  
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

"Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,  
Where knelt the vanquished foe,  
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood  
And waves were white below,  
No more shall feel the victor's tread,  
Or know the conquered knee;  
The harpies of the shore shall pluck  
The Eagle of the Sea.

"Oh, better that her shattered hulk  
Should sink beneath the wave;  
Her thunders shook the mighty deep  
And there should be her grave;  
Nail to the mast her holy flag,  
Set every threadbare sail,  
And give her to the god of storms,  
The lightning and the gale."

"This poem, with the title 'Old Ironsides,' was first published in the *Boston Advertiser*, and was quickly copied by all the newspapers in the country. It was even printed on handbills and circulated in the streets of Washington. Public sentiment was irresistibly aroused. The Navy Department's order was immediately revoked. Congress appropriated the necessary money to rebuild her, practically without alteration of the original model. On June 24, 1833, she was placed in the new dry dock just completed at the Boston Navy Yard, and there became virtually a new ship."

"We can never estimate at too high a value," continues

Hollis,<sup>1</sup> "the education received upon her decks by the sailors who afterwards did most to promote the healthy growth of the Navy. She carried our flag with dignity and honor until our Navy was made up of steamers. In these days when machinery has replaced sails, and man has become independent of wind and tide our Country can well afford to preserve the old ship as the home of departed glory."

But long ere this controversy had been settled officers and crew of the *Constitution* had scattered, and Midshipman William Radford had been heartily welcomed home to St. Louis by his family and many friends.

<sup>1</sup> Hollis: "The Frigate *Constitution*."

## CHAPTER VI

### BACK IN ST. LOUIS

"EVER the center of hospitality was the home of Governor Clark," writes Mrs. Dye, who had access to all the family papers, and who gives the following characteristic picture of the Clark home: "Both the Governor and his wife enjoyed life, took things in leisurely fashion; both had the magnetic faculty of winning people, and they set a splendid table." Under such conditions the Governor's wish that he "might always see his house full," was not difficult of realization. There were no modern hotels in those days, and the Governor's residence became a stopping place for all noted visitors to St. Louis.

We may therefore readily imagine that it was a gay and cheerful household to which William Radford returned after his long absence, and he was warmly welcomed by them all. His mother hailed with deepest joy the arrival of her sailor son; and his stepfather, whose liking for the impulsive boy had ever been most sincere, received him gladly.

His former playmate Meriwether Lewis Clark, was then a cadet at West Point; but there were at home his younger stepbrother George Rogers Clark, beside his own sister Mary, who was then sixteen, and his thirteen-year-old brother John. (Julius, General Clark's third son by his first marriage, did not live to man's estate, and is buried in the family vault at Fotheringay.) In addition to these there was a half-brother, Jefferson Kearny Clark, born February 29, 1824, the uncle whom I visited in after



years in St. Louis, and whom I knew as one of the dearest and most lovable of men.

Many a trip did the Clarks' old-fashioned coach, with footman up behind, make to and from the levee, bringing and taking distinguished strangers, who all came with letters to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, without a pass from whom they could pursue their journey no farther. Longer trips than these were likewise made, for my grandmother was very fond of the White Sulphur Springs, and spent many summers there, driving thither from St. Louis in her four-horse coach. My father often spoke of having, when a boy, accompanied his mother upon several of these lengthy expeditions.

In 1826 Jefferson Barracks had been established near St. Louis, and the pretty girls of the town did their share toward reconciling the "milletoers," as the Creoles called them, to life at the frontier post. A new "milletoer" direct from Europe must have created quite a little excitement among them.

All family traditions point to the fact that the young midshipman entered with great *entrain* into the gay social life of the western town, but on the other hand, the vast plains with their wealth of fauna would doubtless attract him greatly after the confining life on shipboard. From his own account we know that during that stay and later ones in St. Louis he had many long talks with his stepfather, General Clark, from whose lips he heard inner details of that great expedition, "which as time passes will be found to be hardly surpassed in interest by any like ventures before or since, even including Stanley's and Livingstone's African explorations."

On August 10, 1829, Midshipman Radford received orders to join the sloop-of-war *Erie* at Norfolk, Va., preparatory to making a cruise in the West Indies. The ship did not sail until November, and some time during the interim—as is shown by later

correspondence—he visited his uncle William Radford II, and other of his relatives both in Bedford County and in Richmond, Virginia.

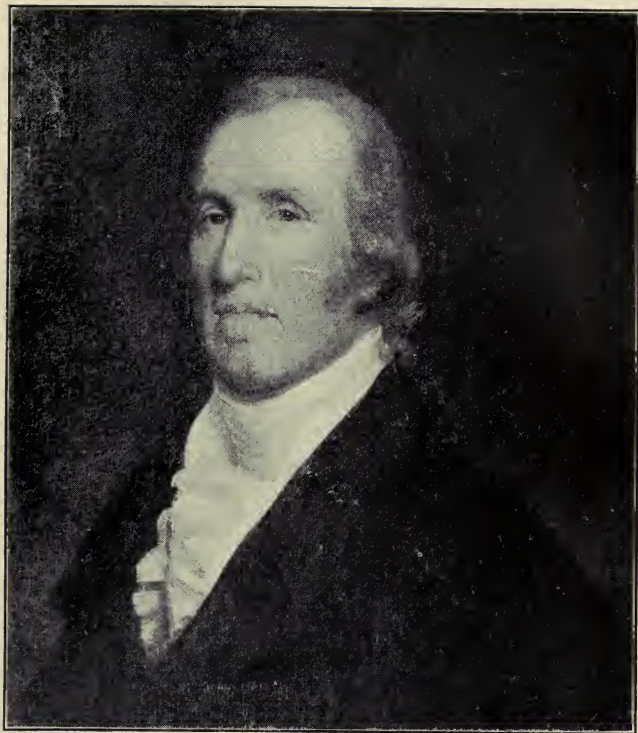
In a report to the Secretary of the Navy, the Hon. John Branch, dated November 1, 1829, David Conner, then captain of the *Erie*, writes: "I have been prevented from sailing by a gale of wind from N.E. until this morning. I am now outside of the lighthouse, and I shall make every exertion to reach La Vera Cruz as soon as possible." Again on November 7th, Captain Conner reports from Port au Prince: "I am now on a cruise to the Windward Islands and Spanish Main, and shall leave this port in a few hours. My officers are all well."

David Conner was born in Harrisburg, Pa., 1792, and became a midshipman January 16, 1809. As acting lieutenant he took part in the battle between the U. S. S. *Hornet* and H. B. M. S. *Peacock*; February 24, 1813; and in the action between the U. S. S. *Hornet* and H. B. M. S. *Penguin*, March 23, 1815, in which latter engagement he was wounded. He was Commodore Commanding Home Squadron in the war with Mexico, 1846, and was included in thanks of Congress for gallant action in capturing the *Peacock* and *Penguin*, being awarded a medal for each. He was also included in thanks of President and Congress to officers of the Navy for services in war with Mexico.

Under date of December 1, 1829, we read: "The Naval force under command of Commodore Ridgely ordered to cruise on the West India Station consisted . . . of the sloops *Falmouth*, *Hornet*, *Erie* and *Natchez*, and schooners *Grampus* and *Shark*."

This cruise, beginning November 1st, lasted a year and one month, so that William Radford would not have been at home at the time of his sister's wedding, which took place at the Clarks' country estate on September 5, 1830.

Mary Radford, who was then eighteen years of age, married



GENERAL WILLIAM CLARK  
Territorial Governor of Missouri  
(of The Lewis and Clark Expedition)





Major (later General) Stephen Watts Kearny, "a gallant, intelligent, and energetic officer, who had served through the war of 1812, and who gave every promise of rising to high distinction should opportunity offer itself."<sup>1</sup>

After the wedding, which was quite an event in the St. Louis social world, the bride and groom left immediately for Fort Leavenworth, where Major Kearny was then stationed; and there, during two years and more, Mrs. Kearny never beheld a single white woman—an instance of the conditions of life in those days.

On March 3, 1831, William Radford became a Passed Midshipman, and was ordered to the Philadelphia Navy Yard, which he left the following September on a six months' leave of absence. This was succeeded by a year's furlough, during which time he is said to have been seriously considering the question of entering the Army, being influenced thereto by the general stagnation of naval affairs, as well as by family associations and traditions and his own love for the freedom of the plains.

However this may be, and whatever may have been the cause of his long stay in the West, we see by this that he was at home at the time of his beloved mother's death, which occurred but a little over a year after her daughter's wedding.

About my grandmother's going hence there was a tragic circumstance which is very graphically narrated by Mrs. Dye.

During the summer of 1831 there appeared in St. Louis four strange Indians, worn and bewildered by their long journey from the far West. They came asking for the "Red Head Chief," and were immediately shown to General Clark's Indian office. Recognizing instantly the tunic and bandeau of foxskins as the tribal dress of the Flathead Indians, General Clark received them gladly, and listened in amazement as old "Black Eagle" and his com-

<sup>1</sup> J. Madison Cutts: "Conquest of California."

panions told of having travelled on foot nearly two thousand miles expressly to see him. They had come from Oregon, and their story was as follows: Some winters earlier an American trapper, in watching their braves dance around the sun-pole on the present site of Walla Walla, had told them that what they were doing was not right, that such worship was "not acceptable to the Great Spirit, and that they should get the white man's book of Heaven."

Disturbed and bewildered the Indians talked the matter over around their council fires, and decided that if they could only find Lewis and Clark they would learn the truth about the matter.

"They went out by the Lolo trail into the buffalo country of Montana," say their descendants still living in Idaho.

General Clark remembered perfectly the hospitality of his Nez-Percé-Flathead friends, who had offered Lewis and himself the pick of their finest horses, and immediately promised that whatever he could do for them should certainly now be done.

"A teacher shall be sent out with the Book," he assured them.

With his usual kindly hospitality he invited them into his own house and to his table, and Mrs. Clark we are told, "devoted herself to their entertainment."

But "just as change of diet and climate had prostrated Lewis and Clark with sickness among the Nez Percés twenty-five years before, so now the Nez Percés fell sick in St. Louis. The summer was hotter than any they had known in their cool northland. Dr. Farrar, the Clarks' own physician, was called, while Mrs. Clark herself waited upon them, bringing them water and medicine as they lay burning with fever in the Council House. They were very grateful to "the beautiful Squaw of the Red Head Chief," but neither medicine nor nursing could save the aged "Black Eagle," whose name is recorded in the St. Louis Cathedral

as: "Keepeelee, buried October 31, 1831," a "Nez Percés de la tribu des Choponeek, nation appelée Tête Plate."

"Ten days after the burial of Black Eagle, Colonel Audrain of St. Charles, a member of the Legislature, also died at General Clark's house."

There were no Red Cross nurses in those days, and my grandmother attended to all those fever-stricken people herself, doubtless under conditions which would horrify the splendidly equipped sanitation corps of today. The result was inevitable. She herself was taken down by this strange malady, which, by the ensuing spring had developed into the dreaded Asiatic cholera, and on Christmas Day, 1831, she who had so faithfully tended others was herself taken from this world.

William Radford, whose leave dated from the previous September, must have been with his mother during the last months of her life, and doubtless often accompanied her upon her errands of mercy to the Council Hall. Of her "going hence" he could never bring himself to speak, but, once she had left this world he found himself united in bonds of closer sympathy than ever before to the brave and courtly gentleman of whom, in his boyhood days, he had been so childishly and unreasonably jealous—for that is the only plausible justification of his conduct at the time of his mother's marriage to General Clark.

## CHAPTER VII

### VARIED EXPERIENCES

"THAT we have no letters or correspondence of my father's of that date is without doubt due to the fact of his mother's early taking from this world, and also because there was no one with her who was especially interested in preserving the letters which she must, of course, have received from her son. Her daughter was living at Fort Leavenworth, and even had she been in St. Louis, Mrs. Kearny was not one who would have cared to preserve old letters, even had they been from her brother William, whom she fairly idolized.

Because of this the data concerning the next few years of William Radford's life are exceedingly meager. In February, 1834, he was ordered to the receiving ship *Sea Gull*, at Philadelphia. She was an altered Brooklyn ferryboat from the East River, half the size of those now in use, but had done good service in aiding to exterminate piracy in the West India Archipelago under the command of Commodore David Porter, father of the illustrious Admiral of the American Navy. From Philadelphia he went, in June of the same year, to the *John Adams* as Acting Master, and in the latter ship again to the Mediterranean, under the command of Capt. David Connor, with whom, as already seen, he had served in the West Indies.

This cruise proved to be an unfortunate one for him, as a letter from the ship's surgeon, dated, "Toulon, November 7, 1834," shows that "Master Wm. Radford" was suffering from an attack of cholera, complicated by a "pulmonary affection which



left him much debilitated," and it was recommended that he be allowed to leave the ship "and reside at Montpelier or some other healthy situation in the South of France; with orders, in case of his restoration to health to rejoin the squadron in the spring;" in the contrary case he was to "take passage to the W. Indies, or Southern part of the U. States."

His returning home via New Orleans, and being still in that city in the month of January, 1836, would appear to indicate that his health had not been completely restored.

In October of that year he was staying in Lynchburg, Va., at the home of his uncle William Radford, with whom he was always on terms of affectionate intimacy. (In his boyhood the White Sulphur Springs had been a place of well-nigh yearly family reunion, where he had become well acquainted with his Virginia relatives, whom he later frequently visited.)

On February 9, 1837, William Radford was appointed to a lieutenancy in the Navy, and the following September received orders to report to Commodore Dallas at Pensacola, Fla., for duty in the West India Squadron.

In a record of the battles in which he had taken part, I find the following in my father's handwriting: "Was engaged in the Florida war. Assisted in capturing many Indians at Tampa Bay."

The State of Georgia had, in 1802, ceded portions of the present States of Alabama and Mississippi to the National Government on its pledge to remove the Indians, who were Creeks and Cherokees, as fast as it could be done.

The red men, learning the object of the frequent purchases of land from them by Georgians, refused in 1824, to sell any more. The Georgians, impatient with the government's delay, attempted to remove the Indians by force.

With this unwarrantable proceeding President Adams inter-

ferred. A new treaty was made with the Creeks, who consented to remove west of the Mississippi, but the Cherokees declined to leave Georgia, as they had a perfect right to do, and the Seminoles likewise declined to leave Florida.

President Jackson, who, although the sentiment had not yet been enunciated, believed that "the only good Indian is a dead one," backed Georgia in her determination to drive out the Cherokees regardless of treaty pledges; they were given a goodly sum for their lands, and compelled by military force to start for the Indian Territory. This was in 1838, and one-third of them perished on the way.

With the Seminoles in Florida it was a different matter. Safely established, as they supposed, in their inaccessible swamps, morasses and impenetrable forests, they steadfastly refused to leave, and there seemed no possible way of driving them out. Several of their lesser chiefs were plied with liquor in an unscrupulous manner, and induced to sign away their lands; some among them were killed by their leaders for their treachery, and then began a war which promised to last forever, and was marked by frightful atrocities.

In the latter part of 1835 Major Dade, with several officers and one hundred men, was ambushed, and all slain excepting two privates who brought the first intelligence of the event.

Major General Jesup, ordered to relieve Gov. C. K. Call in command of the troops in Florida, reached Tampa Bay on the 20th of October, 1836, and "pushed the campaign with energy and skill" (1836-38). In his report to the Hon. J. R. Poinsett, Secretary of War, dated Washington City, July 6, 1838, we find the following: "On the 19th, (March, 1838,) I directed the Seminole chiefs to meet me in council at 12 o'clock on the 20th. . . . None of the chiefs attended the Council, and I directed Colonel Twiggs to seize the whole party. Five hun-

dred and thirty Indians were secured on the 21st and the two succeeding days; which, with one hundred and sixty-five negroes, that at different times were taken and sent to Tampa Bay, made an aggregate of six hundred and seventy-eight."

The time of Lieutenant Radford's arrival in Florida, would seem to point to his having been present with General Jesup's command during the early spring campaign of 1838, and this is rendered all the more probable by the fact that in the month of June of that year he was already engaged elsewhere, as is shown by the following order:

"United States Frigate *Constellation*,  
"Off the Balize, 19th June, 1838.

"Lieutenant W. Radford who proceeds to New Orleans for the purpose of delivering the specie brought by the *Constellation* from Tampico, is authorized to receive from the Consignees the freight for the several amounts as specified in the Bills of lading, grant receipts for the same and do all things in the premises which I could do, were I personally present,

"A. J. Dallas."

Capt. Alexander J. Dallas was born at Philadelphia, Pa., May 15, 1791, appointed midshipman November 22, 1805, and captain in 1828. He commanded the gun division on board the *President* with Commodore John Rodgers, and fired the first gun in reply to the shot from the *Little Belt*, May 16, 1811. He also fired the first gun of the War of 1812, in the engagement between the *President* and the *Belvidera*, June 23, 1812. He is said to have served on Lake Ontario and Lake Erie in the war of 1812, and commanded the *Spitfire* (Commodore Decatur's squadron) in operations against Algiers in 1815. He took part in the chase and capture of the Algerian brig *Estedio* of 20 guns, off Cape Palos, June 19, 1815.

He was in command of the *John Adams* (Commodore Porter's squadron), 1824, operating against pirates in the West Indies, and took part in captures and boat attacks. He was employed in 1832-34 in laying out the Pensacola Navy Yard, and commended for the good work accomplished there. In 1835-37 he commanded the West India Squadron, and co-operated with General Scott and his successor General Jesup, in suppressing the Seminole Indians, in recognition for which service Fort Dallas was named for him. He protected American commerce against Mexican war vessels, and seized the Mexican brig *General Uria* until she made satisfactory terms. He then returned to duty at Pensacola until 1843, when he took command of the Pacific Squadron. He died on the *Savannah* in the harbor of Callao, Peru, on June 3, 1844.

During Lieutenant Radford's cruise in the West Indies his stepfather, General Clark, died on September 1, 1838, and his funeral was "conducted in St. Louis with great pomp and solemnity, the firing of minute guns and all military honors."

The following letter shows that while in New Orleans Radford made a careful investigation of conditions relative to recruiting in that city:

"Washington, D. C., November 21, 1839.

"Agreeably to the Hon. Secretary of the Navy's suggestion, I respectfully submit my views as regards opening a rendezvous at New Orleans without a receiving vessel. As soon as the shipping master shall receive a specified number of men on board the packet bound for Pensacola he shall receive their advance. The captain of the vessel binds himself to deliver them in Pensacola, and on his producing a receipt of delivery he will receive their passage money. For greater security I think an arrangement might be made not to make the advance until delivered in Pensacola. An officer will be on board the packet to receive the



men, see they have their proper outfit, etc.; remain until she sails; the men then can have no opportunity of deserting.

"On entering the harbor at Pensacola the packet will go immediately to the Flagship, or any U. S. vessel that may be in the port, and deliver them to the Commanding Officer.

"I have the honor to be

"With great respect,

"Your ob'dt servt,

"William Radford."

"Hon. J. K. Paulding,

"Secretary of the Navy."

In February, 1840, the *Missouri Republican*, under the heading: "Another Revolutionary Soldier Gone," published an article from which the following is an extract: "Died at the residence of his son, Capt. George Hancock Kennerly, at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, on Feb. 3, 1840, after a short illness, Samuel Kennerly of Fincastle, Botetourt Co., Va., in the 86th year of his age. Deceased was born in Augusta Co., Va., in 1755, and when the war commenced which secured our country its freedom he joined the American army and fought under its standard until Victory crowned the triumph of our flag."

Samuel Kennerly was eighty-six when he decided to leave Fincastle to make his home with his son George in St. Louis, and he survived the change but a few short weeks.

William Radford could have known his maternal grandfather only through visiting him—as he undoubtedly did—during his trips in early years to Virginia.

A cruise in the *Preble* took Lieutenant Radford in June, 1840, to the coast of Laborador, and in November of the same year for the third time to the Mediterranean. This was to be no long

cruise, however, as, on March 6, 1841, he received orders, while at Port Mahon, to return to the United States, and, transferring to the *Brandywine*, sailed immediately, reaching New York in the early part of May.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE OREGON QUESTION

CORRESPONDENCE of the day shows that feeling was running very high in the United States at that time, in regard to the question of the Oregon boundary. The following letter from Lieutenant Radford's cousin, George Wythe Munford, at one time Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia, gives an idea as to the reason of his sudden recall.

"Richmond, May 16, 1841.

"Dear William,

"I received your friendly letter but a few days ago & was delighted to hear that you were once more in the United States and well; my only regret was that your letter was so short. When I saw the arrival of the *Brandywine* announced I had forgotten that you were on board, I thought you still in the Mediterranean. Mr. Stevenson<sup>1</sup> must have thought the prospect of war much more sure than we imagined here, or he would not have induced your return. We looked upon the warlike appearances both in Congress & in the British parliament as but the ebullition of feeling which would cool down, like a passionate fellow when he is allowed to rip out as many hearty oaths as he chooses. But John Bull had better not cut too many swells, we can stand some things, but if he gives us much more of his im-

<sup>1</sup> George E. Badger was then Secretary of the Navy, and I find no record of the name of Stevenson, though there may have been some one of that name temporarily in charge at that time.

pertinence we will give him a dressing, or take one! The truth is, it is well known that the condition of the United States at present is far from being one of readiness for war, & *that* old Bull knows full well, but if he will give us time, we will pull off our coats presently, roll up our sleeves & square our elbows— & then let him take care! We have some boys who are longing for a little distinction.—We should probably be whipped a little in the outset, but we would do like the game chicken, walk slowly around the ring, taking a drubbing kindly until we get wind & every now and then put in a pretty considerable flutter. They couldn't whip us in the long run any way they could fix it,—so let them try! I hope before you are ordered back on another cruise you will obtain a short leave of absence & run on here if it is only to say how'dye & by'tie. I am getting over my labors now & in a few days will be at your service either for a fishing excursion or to stand at your back on a courting one. You will find me a considerable backer! I know how to fix a fellow's gaffs, & trim him up for a real gal hunt.—Maybe I have seen a little of that sort of sport in my days. I think if I had my time to go over again I should know how to prepare for action without wasting so much time. By the bye, the Skipwiths are in town, if it were not for the Preachers you might stand some chance with Helen, but she has set her mind heavenward, & I fear it will be an uphill road for you to travel, though it is certainly a very safe one, if we only keep right ahead! They will leave here tomorrow for Alexandria where they will attend the Episcopal Convention which takes place on Wednesday. The Bruces too arrived here on their way thither. They intend visiting the Falls of Niagara & various other great sights & places before returning home. Look sharp for them in New York after the Convention adjourns & you will overhaul them. Take care that they don't give you chills & fever as they gave my brother



William. Poor fellow he has been in bad health ever since!—Your brother John has been with us since you left & only returned home about a fortnight ago. He stayed here about a month in all. He is as much like you as two black-eye peas. They say that he fell desperately in love with my little niece Sarah Sherrard.” (From all accounts Uncle John was always desperately in love.) “The rumor is that they are engaged to be married. I cannot get at the truth of the matter, for Sarah is as close as wax, but I learn that he is to return here again in the fall. You can get the truth from him no doubt. He stayed with me, but I could not get it out of him. All our friends here are well. My Lizzie (Mrs. G. W. Munford), unites with me in best wishes for your happiness & prosperity. Your room is ready for you; so come & occupy it. Believe me sincerely your friend & cousin,

“George W. Munford.”

“Lieut. William Radford, U. S. Navy,  
“New York.”

(George Wythe Munford was named for George Wythe, Signer of the Declaration of Independence, who was a beloved and intimate friend of his father's.)

More stately in tone was William Radford II's epistle to his nephew, commencing: “Dear William, Your letter of the 20th has just been received and it affords me great pleasure to know that you have returned to this country and that you enjoy good health. It will give us at all times pleasure to see you and to know of your welfare. Your Aunt Betsy (Mrs. Wm. Radford, daughter of Gen. Wm. Mosely) is at this time at the Red Sulphur Springs, waiting on our beloved daughter, who is in extremely low health. . . .

“Your affectionate Uncle,  
“William Radford.”

The home of William Radford II, in Bedford County, was at all times open to my father as though he had been a son of the house, and he spent many happy days there between his cruises. That he was staying there in the month of October, 1841, is shown by a letter sent to that address. Being the elder by some years William Radford had been left by his mother the guardian of his brother John, and no light responsibility must this have been, judging by certain letters I have before me. It would be unfair, however, to give these without first stating that despite his reprehensible habit of using *strong* language Uncle John was really a most attractive and interesting man. The following is evidently an answer to a letter hauling him over the coals for certain misdemeanors.

“St. Louis, October 2, 1841.

“Dear Brother,

“Capt. Hutter told you a damb Lie. I started from here last winter on \$250. to go to New Orleans after a damb rascal who tried to cheat me out of three thousand dollars. I went down to take possession of a steam Boat of his and sell it, that was my *Business* in New Orleans, and when I got through that I had to go to New York, and as there had been so much rain in New Orleans & Alabama that there were no stages running I had to go by water, and as it cost very little more to go by Havana I went there and spent four or five days, and then sailed for Charleston, as I had business there for Mr. Dennies and he requested me to stay there two or three weeks and become acquainted with his mother and other relations; but as I found it dull I only stayed four days, and went on to spend the rest of my time with my relations in Virginia. I spent two weeks in Richmond and then went right on to Philadelphia where I arrived two or three weeks before I received my remittances . . . and all of my expences for the trip did not amount to over six

hundred dollars; and four hundred and fifty of that was actual expenses for traveling & board, leaving one hundred and fifty for my extra expenses such as theater and so forth. Now Brother, do you think that very expensive or extravagant for a young man, and especially as it was my first visit and you know I passed through all of the principal Cities in the U. S. except one!!

"Now as to my relations here none of them have done one damnable thing for me except Col'n Clark & yourself, for which I feel duly obliged. I am getting on very well in my business here and making a very handsome support. . . .

"Your Brother

"John."

From the *Brandywine* Lieutenant Radford had been transferred to the *Pennsylvania* which was stationed at Norfolk, and there he received the following order:

"Navy Department, December 20, 1841.

"Sir,

"You will proceed to New York without delay, and report to Capt. Perry for duty on board the U. S. Sloop of War *Ontario*, to be stationed at New Orleans as a Receiving Ship,

"I am, respect'ly yours,

"A. P. Upshur."

"Lieut. Wm. Radford, U. S. Navy,

"Norfolk."

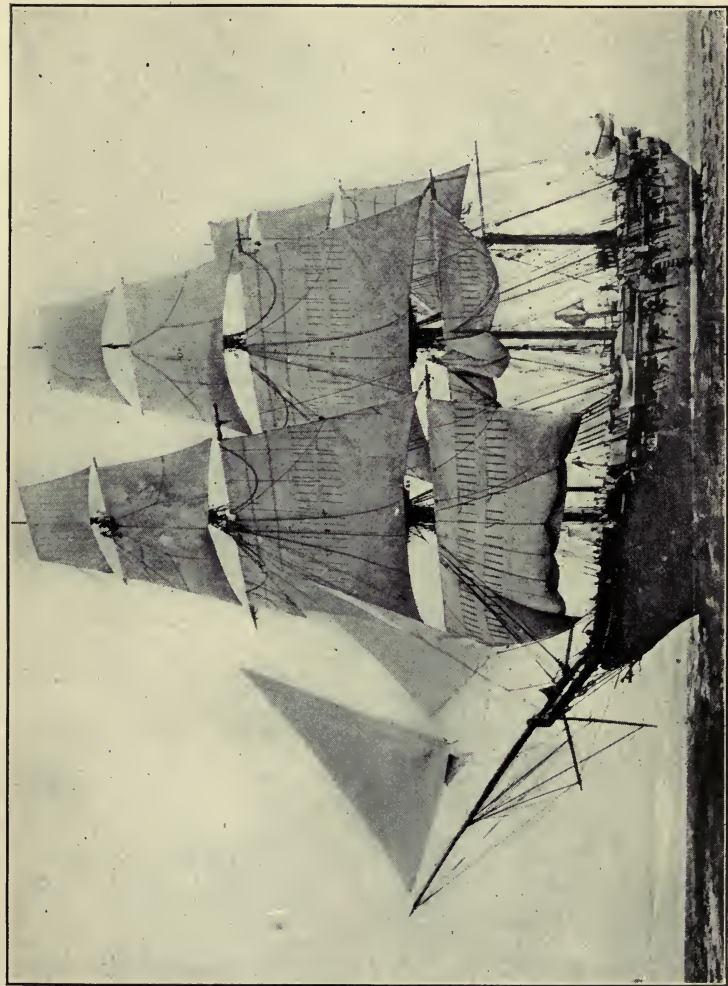
The *Ontario* was fitting out at the Brooklyn Navy Yard under command of Lieut. L. M. Powell, who wrote to Lieutenant Radford from Washington in January, 1842: "The officers are ordered . . . Wedderbourne as Surgeon—Go on and organize

the ship. If anything is wanting Commodore Perry will remedy it. Go to him freely, he will do anything to meet our wishes which he can approve. Your affairs are just as you desire and will be made to suit your views of the Rendezvous.—I shall soon be with you—as soon as the Aud'tr lets me off.”

Commodore Matthew Galbraith Perry has been called the pioneer of the steam navy of the United States. He received his appointment as midshipman on January 18, 1809, and was ordered to the schooner *Revenge*, commanded by his brother Oliver. She mounted twelve guns, had a crew of ninety men, and was attached to the squadron under Commodore John Rodgers, which numbered four frigates, five sloops, and some smaller vessels. His duty was to guard our coasts from the Chesapeake to Passamaquoddy Bay, to prevent impressment of American sailors by British cruisers.

On the 12th of October, 1810, Midshipman Perry was ordered from the *Revenge* (which was wrecked off Watch Hill, R. I., January 8, 1811,) to the frigate *President*. This brought him on the flagship, the finest of the heavy frigates of 1797, and directly under the eye of Commodore Rodgers. Midshipman Perry gives in his diary a detailed account of the meeting with the British sloop-of-war *Little Belt*, and the exchange of shots which precipitated the war of 1812. An entry under date of June 20, 1812, reads: “At 10 A.M. news arrived that war would be declared the following day against G. B. Made the signal for all officers and boats. Unmoored ship and fired a salute.” Although war was declared on the 12th of June, official information did not reach the army officers until June 20th, and the naval commanders until the 21st. A sketch of Commodore Rodgers’ activities during this cruise having already been given we will only say that after three years of service, under his own eye, the Commodore wrote to the Department asking that Perry be promoted, and





U. S. Frigate *Constellation*



this being granted February 27, 1813, Matthew Perry became, at eighteen, an acting lieutenant.

Four of the Perry brothers served their country in the Navy in 1813; two in the *Lawrence* on Lake Erie, and two on the *President* at sea. From the *President* Matthew Perry was ordered to the *United States*, under Commodore Decatur. Blockaded in the harbor of New London by a British squadron, this frigate, with the *Wasp* and *Macedonian*, was kept inactive until the end of the war. On Christmas Eve, 1814, Lieutenant Perry was married to Miss Jane Slidell, then but seventeen years of age. On February 11, 1815, the British ship *Favorite*, bearing the olive branch, arrived at New York, too late to prevent the bloody battle of New Orleans, or the capture of the *Cyane* and *Levant*.

Besides being "our second war for national independence," the struggle of 1812 was emphatically for "sailors' rights." At the beginning of hostilities there were on record in the State Department at Washington 6,527 cases of impressed American seamen. This was, doubtless, but a small part of the whole number, which probably reached 20,000; or enough to man our Navy five times over. In 1811, 2,548 impressed American seamen were in British prisons, refusing to serve against their country; this was reported by the British Admiralty to the House of Commons, February 1, 1815. In January, 1811, according to Lord Castlereagh's speech of February 8, 1813, 3,300 men, claiming to be Americans, were serving in the British navy.<sup>1</sup>

On July 5, 1821, Perry, in command of a man-of-war, the *Shark*, conveyed Dr. Eli Ayres to Africa as Agent of the United States in Liberia. At that time he was deeply interested in ideas of ship hygiene, and his ambition was to make the cruise without one case of fever or scurvy. Of the slave trade at that time Perry wrote: "The severe laws of Congress had the desired effect

<sup>1</sup> Roosevelt's "Naval History of the War of 1812."

of preventing American citizens from employing their time and capital in this iniquitous traffic."

Perry next, with his twelve-gun vessel the *Shark*, lent a hand in the suppression of piracy in the West Indies, under Commodore Porter. On July 26, 1824, he joined the *North Carolina*, and served as executive officer of the flagship of Commodore Rodgers' squadron during William Radford's first Mediterranean cruise.

During the administration of Andrew Jackson, which began in 1829, the boundary question with England, and the long-standing claims for French spoliation prior to 1801, pressed for solution.

In June, 1829, Perry sailed in command of the *Concord* to take the American Envoy, John Randolph of Roanoke, to Russia, and after a run of forty-three days reached Cronstadt on August 9th. While there the Czar Nicholas I came on board and inspected the ship with unconcealed pleasure. Perry and a party of his officers were received in imperial audience at the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, and he was invited to come again with only his interpreter and private secretary. The interview that time was prolonged and informal. The Czar complimented Perry very highly on his naval knowledge, and remarked that the United States was highly favored in having such an officer. Nicholas I was the grandson of the Empress Catherine II, by whom had been laid the foundation of the abiding friendship between Russia and the United States. King George III, of Great Britain had, in 1775, attempted to hire mercenaries in Russia to fight against his American subjects. The Empress Catherine refused the proposition with scorn, replying that she "had no soldiers to sell." Another friendly act which touched the heart of our young republic was the liberal treaty of 1824, the first made with the United States. This instrument declared the navigation and fisheries of the Pacific free to the people of both nations. Indirectly, this



was the cause of so many American sailors being wrecked in Japan, and of our national interest in the empire which Perry opened to the world by the treaty of March 31, 1854.

When, on January 7, 1833, Captain Perry received orders to report to Commodore Charles Ridgley at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, his longest term of shore duty (ten years) began. When a boy he had often seen the inventor, Fulton, busy with his schemes; he had also seen the successful trial trip of the first *Fulton*, on June 1, 1815, and he now applied himself to the study and mastery of the steam engine, with a view of solving the problem of the use of steam as a motor for war vessels. He likewise organized the Brooklyn Naval Lyceum, which stands today in honorable usefulness as a monument of his enterprise. Perry was offered the command of the famous U. S. Antarctic Exploring Expedition, but declined the honor because of his having become deeply interested in the idea of creating a steam navy. The command was most worthily bestowed on Lieut. Charles Wilkes, and this, the first American Exploring Expedition of any magnitude, became known to all as the "Wilkes Exploring Expedition."

On June 30, 1834, Congress appropriated five thousand dollars to test the question of the safety of boilers in vessels. A "steam battery" was built at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, in 1836, for the command of which Perry applied. On October 4, 1837, Perry took command of the second *Fulton*, of which he writes: "The *Fulton* will never answer as a sea-vessel, but the facility of moving from port to port places at the service of the Department a force particularly available for immediate action at any point."

The following May he took the *Fulton* to Washington, "where President Van Buren and his cabinet enjoyed the sight of a warship independent of wind and tide."

It was to this distinguished officer that Lieutenant Radford was ordered to report; and when, for some personal reason, Lieutenant Powell applied to be relieved of the command of the *Ontario*, the first order was superseded by the following:

“Navy Department, February 1, 1842.

“Sir,

“You will report to Capt. Perry for the command of the Sloop of War *Ontario*, designed to be employed at New Orleans as a Receiving Ship.

“As soon as the *Ontario* shall be in readiness for sea, you will proceed with her to New Orleans, and upon your arrival at that place, and as soon as a Commander shall report as your successor, you will regard yourself as detached and will then report to Commander Shields for duty at the Rendezvous under his command.

“I am respect’fy yours,

“A. P. Upshur.”

“Lieut. Wm. Radford,

“U. S. S. *Ontario*, New York.”

Lieut. Woodhull Schenck, one of the officers of the *Ontario*, was detached for court-martial duty shortly before the date of sailing, and he writes as follows:

(Lieut. Woodhull Schenck was appointed midshipman December 30, 1831, lieutenant, September 8, 1841, and died May 9, 1849.)

“Baltimore, March 10, 1842.

“Dear Radford,

“I hope by the time this will reach its destination you may be safely moored off the Queen City. I fear I shall not be able to

join you for some time, perhaps two months from this time. The Courts are now upon the trial of G——; C—— comes on next . . . but let them go it, and like the Kilkennys leave nothing but their tails! You escaped with the skin of your teeth as an order was on its way for you when the ship sailed. Davis & Lockhart are both here, in truth everybody appears to be here, there are over a hundred Naval officers now in town. Tell Wedderbourne the prospect of my claim appears to brighten. . . . I'll give you both champagne if I have any cash left by the time I join you. . . . I hear the Committee on Ways & Means have reported for the expenditure of 800,000 of dollars for the increase of the Navy. The Admiralty bill will stand no chance. So much for Congress—which I fear will be all old [news] thro the d——d newspapers, those drawbacks to interesting letter-writing. Write and let me know all about your passage, and how the ship is situated—where she will lay during the summer, etc. Remember me to all, in truth consider this a mess letter and charge the postage accordingly—but I shall hold you personally responsible for the answer. Write yourself if you can, if not tell Scott to *order* Jenkins to do so—Three cheers. . . . old Ballard is on his last legs! I will write to you again ere long, believe me yours truly,

“W. T. Schenck.”

The following are extracts from a letter from Lieutenant Huger, dated “Paris, March 12, 1842.”

“It is rather a boast of dissipated habits to commence a letter at this time of night (near twelve) & tell you I am just dressed for a grand Bal Dramatique at a Theatre, given by actors & actresses, Corps de ballets and opera, that set! I mention this little circumstance to show how my health and strength have recovered to enable me to commit these indiscretions, and shall

finish my letter tomorrow & perhaps tell you of some of the doings at the ball; though just now I must say that I feel little like either dancing or writing, but the hour of meeting is so cursed unnatural, and as I have a half hour with no one to bestow my tediousness upon, I will even inflict you, hoping when you receive it, you may be expecting similar enjoyment, and may return the compliment the first idle moment you have. . . .

"I thought both Lee and yourself had forgotten me, & had given you both up as d——d lazy fellows & swore you should never hear from me again, but you see I forgive you, you have both made up your faults, and I hope you may still continue to let me hear from you, for I am wofully neglected by friends in America. . . .

"Paris has been very gay, a great many dinners and dances, but now being Lent, we have taken to tea, conversations, etc. . . . The people here are speculating somewhat on the probability of war with Great Britain, but we appear more intent on squabbling at home; I fear that jarring at home will prevent any Naval Bill from passing, and if we do make anything of a naval fight we shall have to be kicked into it. Let me know what becomes of you next summer, don't go to the White Sulphur; but let me hear from you wherever you are. I shall be here at least three months longer.

"Your friend—Huger."<sup>1</sup>

There were two Hugers in the service at that time. *Francis*, appointed midshipman, June 1, 1826, who died January 6, 1849; and *Thomas B.*, appointed midshipman, March 5, 1835, who resigned and went south at the beginning of the Civil War. I believe this letter to be from Lieut. Francis Huger.

Phillips S. Lee, midshipman, November 22, 1825, Lieutenant,

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced *Eugee*.



February 9, 1837. Became Rear Admiral, April 22, 1870. Retired February 13, 1873. Died January 5, 1897. Rear Admiral Lee married Miss Blair, sister of Montgomery Blair, and of Capt. James Blair, U. S. Navy, all of Washington, D. C. He and my father were always close friends.

A clash between England and the United States was, at that time, all but brought about by reason of the long disputed Oregon boundary question, and it is of interest to note that it was Marcus Whitman, one of the missionaries who had gone at General Clark's instigation to carry the "White man's Book of Heaven" to the Indians, who was the first to warn the government at Washington "of the certainty of its losing Oregon unless prompt measures were taken to save it." To accomplish this "Whitman journeyed across the Continent in the depth of a severe winter, reaching the Capital in March, 1843, when a compromise was effected between the two countries and the Oregon boundary definitely settled."

McElroy, in his "Winning of the Far West," gives the date of the signing of the treaty between the two countries as June 15, 1846, adding: "With its ratification British relations ceased to embarrass the American Nation which was thus left free to devote its energies to Mexico."

In President Tyler's Third Annual Message, December, 1843, we read: "After the most rigid, and, as far as practicable, unbiassed examination of the subject, the United States have always contended that their rights appertain to the entire region of the country lying on the Pacific and embraced within 42° and 54° 40' of north latitude." McElroy further remarks: "When the Democratic National Convention assembled at Baltimore (May 27, 1844,) and nominated James K. Polk for President, it is clear that whatever we may think of the legal justice of the cry, the Democratic party did not misjudge the temper of the American

people when they inscribed upon their party banner the motto: "Fifty-four forty; or Fight."

A letter from Lieut. L. N. Carter, who afterwards left the Navy and joined the Army, contains interesting items concerning events of that period.

"Washington, April 3, 1842.

"Dear Radford,

"The bundle and letters were received in due season and I thank you. I presume by the time you arrive at Orleans this will reach you. . . . The winter passed as usual; the Misses B—— were much admired, the eldest was termed beautiful. . . . Stanard, whom you remember at the White Sulphur, in 1836, is to marry Miss Ellen. . . . A great number of Naval people of all sizes are sent into the Senate for confirmation, their fate seems doubtful, tho' I think they'll pass. Congress is embarrassed & mean, & nothing but the threatening aspect of affairs will make them do what is right. Courts Martial in abundance, the bigger the rascal the better chance of escape if he is a little cunning & has adroit counsel. . . . I keep aloof as much as possible. . . . Powell is here and promises to assist me in extricating you from Orleans; write and let me know when you wish to retire from contemplating the broad expanse of the Mississippi. Watts looked young, handsome & delicate, free from the use of poisons, & was judged here to be the choice of the Sovereign Lady, but rumor has dashed his success to the winds. I agree the beauty of Ellen was enough to set 'ten Poets raving' without having, in the trading language of the North, a dollar to her name. . . .

"People are breaking everywhere, & nothing seems safe in the shape of property. Pennsylvania will not repudiate, but she will not & cannot pay her debt. Paupers like myself are mere spectators, & look with childlike innocence on all around.

"I shall be happy to greet you here as is my wont, & number

you among the band of friends that are the chosen, of your cordial friend, L. N. C."

A letter from Capt. Samuel Mercer (midshipman, March 4, 1815; commander, September 8, 1841; captain, 1855; died March 6, 1862), dated Philadelphia, April 6, 1842, after notifying Lieutenant Radford that he had been summoned as witness in a court-martial at Baltimore, and begging him to come as quickly as possible, terminates as follows: "Congress has done little or nothing, and from their present temper seem resolved to do about as good a business for the remainder of the Session. . . . Everything appears squally, and war seems almost inevitable.—If we were prepared I should say—let it come! But in our present defenseless state a war would be disastrous."

It would be but natural to assume that Lieutenant Scott, the writer of the following letter, was not a native of the "Hub."

"U. S. Ship *Ohio*, Boston, July 25, 1842.

". . . I am pleased to hear you have left N. Orleans as I can well imagine the temperature was anything but pleasant, to say nothing of the yellow fever which our mutual friend Jenkins had such a horror of. I almost envy you the delightful fall you will pass in shooting, etc. Why did you not apply for Jenkins to accompany you, he would have made an independent fortune by supplying the St. Louis market with game, being so expert on the *wing*! He informs me it is a pleasure to see the fine order the *Ontario* is in by the assiduous attentions of the *Executive officer*. I expect the *most* assiduous attentions have been to Miss Knot as he kept dark about the matter in his letter to me. You see I am still on board this ship which is anything but pleasant as you may imagine. . . . This is the dullest & most uninteresting place that man was ever doomed to be at; in the way of Navy news, the *Brandywine* has arrived at Norfolk, the *Columbia* has sailed for

the coast of Brazil, etc., etc. We hope to sail by the first of September. Financial affairs here are truly deplorable; there has not been a dollar on the station for three months so you may judge my credit is exhausted. Cadwalader sends his respects & desires me to tell you one of the Miss Bruces is engaged to be married but does not know the individual. Who knows but you are the happy man. If so inform me. . . .

“Wishing you every happiness, I remain, Your Friend,  
“G. H. Scott.”

Gustavus H. Scott was appointed from Virginia, August 1, 1828; was on the frigate *Guerrière*, Pacific Squadron, 1829-31; commissioned lieutenant, February 25, 1841; on the frigate *Columbus*, Mediterranean Squadron, 1843-44; commander, December 27, 1856; commanding steam gunboat *Maratanza*, North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, 1862; Blockading Squadron, 1865; Commodore, 1869; Rear Admiral, February, 1873, commanding North Atlantic Squadron. He died in 1882.

The above letter was addressed to St. Louis, and an official letter from Lieutenant Radford, from that city, to the Hon. A. P. Upshur, Secretary of the Navy, dated October 20, 1842, reads;

“Having been instructed by the Department when the Rendezvous was closed at New Orleans, to keep it informed of my whereabouts, I report myself at this place & respectfully request to know when the Rendezvous will be reopened that I may be there. . . .”

William Radford spent the winter of 1842-43 at the Rendezvous in New Orleans, and in August, 1843, was ordered as lieutenant to the frigate *Savannah*, which was fitting out in New York for a cruise in the Pacific.

In April of that year he received a letter from his brother John announcing his engagement to Miss Sophy Menard, daugh-



ter of the Governor of Illinois, and their wedding is mentioned by General Kearny in the following letter:

“Jefferson Barracks, September 20, 1843.

“Dear William,

“Lieutenant De Camp will leave here tomorrow for New York, & as I understand that you are, or are *to be* stationed there I must avail myself of the opportunity of writing you a few lines. You are a shabby fellow—You have been moving about for the last few months but have left us in entire ignorance of your movements—Mary has been desirous of writing to you, but we knew not where to direct so that a letter would reach you.

“John was married at Kaskaskia. Mary and myself—Lewis & Abbey (Meriwether Lewis Clark, & his wife, Abbey Churchill) & several others went down and attended. . . . John and Sophy are both desirous of settling on a farm—If he can find one in this neighborhood to suit him, he says he will buy it.

“General Gaines left us a few days since, not to return before next spring, if then. I succeeded him in the command of the Department—I am looking out for a good house in St. Louis. . . .

“We are all well here—Write to us—Go and see my brother Phil—He lives somewhere in Broadway—No. 600, or thereabouts, Yours,

“S. W. Kearny.”

(The “Phil” here referred to was a brother, and not to be confounded with his nephew, Gen. Phil Kearny.)

A second letter from the same, to the same, written ten days later, says: “Yours of the 9th inst. to your Sister was received about a week since, & as she appears to be as unwilling or dilatory to write letters as you are, the answering of it falls upon me.”

As both my aunt, Mrs. Kearny, and my father detested letter writing I cannot but insert this phrase, although, considering the

fact that a letter from him had just been received, it appeared hardly the fitting moment in which to reproach him for his delinquencies.

“What a delightful prospect,” continues the missive, “for the next three years—A cruise in the Pacific! If I am sent to the Columbia as Governor General of Oregon, we shall have the pleasure of meeting. If the *Savannah* is a fine Frigate & you should have a pleasant Mess, why then your prospects must be agreeable. I know that you officers prefer the Mediterranean to the Pacific, but the latter will be new to you—Not so the former—& the novelty cannot be otherwise than interesting—Keep a diary—No doubt there would be a monotony in some parts—But in others it would be different.” (If Lieutenant Radford ever followed this advice the diary was lost with his other records and papers on the *Cumberland* as will be told later.)

“John & his wife are now with us—She is a very fine woman—good sense—good ideas, but not brought up to be a good manager. . . . John has no vices but is a most indolent man & reflects less about the future maintenance of a family than any man of my acquaintance. In looking for a farm he is constantly talking about the *good shooting & fishing near it*—Perhaps when once settled he may begin to work. . . .”

Poor, dear, happy-go-lucky Uncle John! Small wonder was it that his energetic and thoroughly practical brother-in-law had little patience with him.

“Lieutenant Turner returned yesterday from his furlough,” continues the letter . . . then “We have had a visit from Marshal Bertrand, or General Bertrand as he calls himself. It was arranged on the 22nd that he should come down here with me next afternoon from St. Louis. So we had the troops ready for a Review & the cannon for a salute. I went up to the city, but he had gone on a visit to the mouth of the Missouri & did not

return til exact 4.30 P.M. He was detained by visitors & business til near 6 when I got him & Colonel Benton in my carriage & drove down rapidly but it was in the dark of the evening before we got here, & too late for Review or Salute—But all the officers called in full Uniform, & half an hour after the Ladies of the Garrison were introduced & we had a Military Soirée that evening. At 10 at night a Steam Boat stopped for him, & he left us much gratified with his visit & has gone to the 'Hermitage.'"<sup>1</sup>

"He had with him a Son who is a Captain in the French Army, & a Friend. He is a very interesting old man, & one whom all Soldiers can delight in paying honors to,—I hope you may see him.

"As you will probably not sail for 3 or 4 weeks Mary will write to you to bid you good-bye. Let me hear from you. We are all well.

Yours,

"S. W. Kearny."

Marshal Bertrand (Henri Gratien) was a French general who, through devotion to the Emperor Napoleon I followed him to exile in the islands of Elba and St. Helena. In 1840 he brought the remains of the Emperor back to France, to find a stately resting-place beneath the dome of the Invalides.

The order to join the U. S. Frigate *Savannah* was received by Lieutenant Radford when at the Greenbriar White Sulphur Springs, in August, 1843, and the following October he sailed from New York for the Pacific Station, where four strenuous and eventful years of his life were to be spent.

<sup>1</sup> Ex-President Andrew Jackson's home, near Nashville, Tenn.

## CHAPTER IX

### OUTBREAK OF THE MEXICAN WAR

SAILING from New York on October 19, 1843, the *Savannah*, under the command of Capt. Andrew Fitzhugh, entered the harbor of Rio de Janeiro on December 18th, and there the officers bade adieu to the Hon. Harvey M. Watterson, Diplomatic Agent of the United States, who had come out as a passenger on the ship.

From Rio the *Savannah* proceeded to Valparaiso, meeting there the *Erie* under Commodore A. J. Dallas, who, on February 11, 1844, hoisted his broad pennant aboard the *Savannah*, which, from that date, became the flagship of the Pacific Squadron.

An entry in the log of the *Savannah*, dated February 25, 1844, reads: "Captain Andrew Fitzhugh left the ship to return to the United States, & received 3 cheers from the ship's company."

That Lieutenant Radford was still attached to the flagship at the beginning of April, 1844, is shown by the following order.

"U. States Frigate, *Savannah*,

"Callao, 1st April, 1844.

"Sir,

"A Naval General Court Martial will convene on board of the United States Ship *Warren* on Tuesday the 2nd day of April, 1844. Of this Court you are a Member and will report yourself accordingly to the President thereof.

"Very respectfully, yr. obt. svt.,

"A. J. Dallas."

"Lieutenant Wm. Radford,

"U. S. Frigate *Savannah*."



In the log of the *Savannah* we read, however, under date of April 24, 1844, "Lieut. Wm. Radford detached from this ship and ordered to the *Warren*."

To the *Warren* he accordingly went a Senior First Lieutenant, and there is an undated draft of a letter written by him to his brother-in-law, General (then Colonel) Kearny, from some unnamed Mexican port, on the Gulf of California, in January, 1845, which gives a graphic description of a cruise made in the latter vessel between the months of April and December, 1844.

"Dear Colonel,

"Months have passed since an opportunity has offered to send a letter to the U. S. I wrote to Sister from Papeita some three or four months since, but as it had to pass Cape Horn it will hardly get home as soon as this. After leaving Papeita, one of the Society Isles in possession of the French,<sup>1</sup> we reached the Sandwich Isles after a Passage of some twenty odd days, and entered the harbor of Honolulu, Island of Oahu, which is the headquarters of the King of all the Isles, and also the principal station of the American Missionaries. There are some several hundred in the different Sandwich Isles, and they appear to have done something toward civilizing the natives. They have the King entirely under their charge, consequently they are in fact the government, and the King a tool in their hands, whom they have put in a red coat with a pair of epaulettes. However, he has a large suite, quite civilized, that make a very respectable appearance . . . the Ladies as well as gentlemen decked out in the most approved European fashions. The whole population are fast increasing in this Island, and two generations more will hardly leave a full blooded Indian amongst them. After remain-

<sup>1</sup>In 1843 Admiral du Petit Thouars procured the signature of a document placing the Tahiti Archipelago, or Society Isles, under French protection. Papeita is the port of the island of Tahiti.

ing some three weeks at Honolulu we sailed for St. Francisco, Upper California, and adverse winds drove us nearly as far North as the mouth of the Columbia river, making our voyage to St. Francisco twenty-eight days. The Bay of St. Francisco is one of the most splendid in the world, offering safe harbors in every part and extending north and south from the entrance some sixty miles. There is a small village containing some few hundred inhabitants, supported principally by the sale of hides. The country is very mountainous and almost destitute of wood, and strange to say their most disagreeable weather is during the summer months. Their winters, though in nearly the same latitude as St. Louis, are never visited with anything colder than a light frost. After remaining there a few days we sailed for Monterey, the place of Commodore Jones' exploit."

(Commodore Thomas Ap Catesby Jones, commanding the U. S. Pacific Squadron in 1842, believing war to have been declared between the United States and Mexico, entered the harbor of Monterey with two ships, the *United States* and *Cyane*, on October 20th, and sending ashore 150 men under Commander Stribling demanded the immediate surrender of the place. The garrison, unable to defend themselves, marched out of the fort "with music and colors flying, but the following day, it having been discovered that the war rumors were devoid of foundation, the place was restored to its rightful owners, the American garrison retiring to their vessels, which immediately fired a salute in honor of the Mexican flag.")<sup>1</sup>

"It also is a very small place, and what Commodore Jones wanted with it I cannot imagine. . . . We only remained there two days and sailed for this place, where we will make as short a stay as practicable. From what I saw and learned of California it can never be a very densely populated country, as by far the

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft's "California."



U. S. Frigate *Savannah* —  
Flagship of the Pacific Squadron, 1844 —





greater part is too mountainous for cultivation. I saw some of the Immigrants who came across the mountains, at St. Francisco."

("The immigrant parties of 1844, like those of the preceding year, were two in number; and, as in 1843 also, one came from Oregon, while the other crossed the Sierra by a more direct route to California.")<sup>1</sup>

"They were not pleased with the Oregon country and had wandered along the coast until they reached St. Francisco, and from what I have learned the Oregon is not a very desirable Country. It is much better timbered than the Californias though report says it is very unhealthy. However, we should and ought by rights to have some possessions on the Pacific, and I for one am willing to fight for this country. If we give up the Oregon Country to the English or any other Nation I think we had better abandon our Navy and throw ourselves upon the mercy of any Nation who may think proper to take our possessions from us.

"I have not received any letters since we sailed from the U. S. Indeed there has been no opportunity, as since I left up to this time I have sailed upwards of thirty thousand miles, and am now in the slowest sailing vessel in the Navy, consequently we see an eternity of salt water and but little land, and as the places we visit are but half civilized, I have been out of the ship but twenty-four hours on *liberty* (as we call it) in six months.

"We leave this place today for Honolulu again, though we will run down the coast about one hundred and fifty miles to touch at St. Blas first. From Honolulu we will return immediately to Chili which is about eighty days' passage. Honolulu is about twenty-four hundred miles nearly due west. This ocean is entirely too large for any use, or at least I am disgusted with the distance in a slow vessel. There is no harbor here or at St. Blas, and as this is the Hurricane Season we will not anchor but merely

<sup>1</sup> *Idem.*

send a boat in to communicate, get news, etc. We have had much sickness on board. The Dysentry killed seven of the crew. I was dangerously ill myself but have recovered. . . ."

Here the writing terminates abruptly, but that Lieutenant Radford had in no way recovered is shown by a letter from the ship's surgeon, dated, " U. S. S. *Warren*, Callao, May 9, 1845," requesting a " Medical survey on the person of Lieut. Wm. Radford," and adding: " This gentleman suffered severely from Dysentry and Inflammation of the bowels during his late cruise in this ship and his health is still so delicate . . . that I have felt it my duty to urge upon him the necessity of a cessation of duty in this climate for the present.

" Very Respectfully, etc.,

" Wm. Jn. Powell, Surgeon."

" Jos. B. Hull, Esq.,

" Commanding U. S. S. *Warren*."

This report was transmitted by Captain Hull to Commodore Sloat, who had replaced Commodore Dallas as Commander-in-Chief of the United States forces in the Pacific, the latter having died at Callao, Peru, on June 3, 1844.

John Drake Sloat was born at Sloatsburg, Rockland County, New York, July 26, 1781, and appointed midshipman U. S. N. February 12, 1800. He was sailing-master on February 7, 1812, and maneuvered the frigate *United States* under Commodore Decatur when he captured the crack British frigate *Macedonia*, October 25, 1812. For this Sloat received the thanks of Congress, and was made lieutenant, July 24, 1812. When in command of the schooner *Grampus*, in March, 1825, he suppressed Cofrecinas, the last of the West Indian pirates, who was captured and shot. Made captain on February 9, 1837, and commodore November 1, 1843. On August 27, 1844, he was ordered to command the Pacific Squadron, and on July, 1846, he took possession

of California, and hoisted the United States flag at Monterey. He organized the Mare Island Navy Yard at California in 1852, was made Rear Admiral on the retired list on August 6, 1866, and died at Staten Island, New York, November 28, 1867, aged 86 years.

The report resulted in the calling of a board of three surgeons, who were ordered "to hold a strict and careful examination into the case of Lieutenant Radford, and report if the state of his health is such as to unfit him for duty for the present."

This examination resulted in a report that, at least to the uninitiated, would appear a model of ambiguity. It is dated "U. S. S. *Warren*, Callao, May 11, 1845," and is as follows:

"In obedience to your orders of the 10th inst. we have held a strict and careful examination into the case of Lieut. Wm. Radford, and report that the state of his health is not such as to unfit him for duty at present or render his immediate return to the U. States necessary. And in accordance with the regulations of the Navy Department in regard to surveys, we have to report that he is suffering under chronic dysentery which originated in this climate and will probably continue so long as he remains in it. Change to a more favorable climate is necessary.

"Very Respectfully, Yr. Obt. Servts.

"Wm. Maxwell Wood, Surgeon,

"Jos. Nelson, & Chas. H. Oakley, Assts."

"Commodore John D. Sloat,

"Comdg. U. S. Naval Forces on Pacific Ocean."

Whatever may have been the true opinion of the surgeons, Lieutenant Radford did not leave the *Warren*, which, during the summer of 1845, was again on the California coast.

That was a period of intense expectancy as every officer and man of the Pacific Squadron was then keenly alive to the possibility of war with Mexico.

On the 2nd of October, 1845, Commodore Sloat, while at Honolulu with the flagship *Savannah*, received a "secret and confidential order" from the Navy Department instructing him, "as soon as he ascertained with certainty that Mexico had declared war against the United States," to possess himself at once of the port of San Francisco, and "to blockade or occupy such ports as his force might permit." "In fact he was required to exercise all the belligerent rights which belonged to him on the declaration of war, or the commencement of hostilities."<sup>1</sup>

The *Warren*, reaching Honolulu on October 4th, watched the *Savannah* set sail on the 12th, and four days later sailed herself for Mazatlan, following up the flagship. In this port Commodore Sloat remained for seven and a half months, "while the other vessels of his squadron were flitting hither and thither, watching the movements of the British fleet, under Admiral Seymour with his flagship "*Collingwood* of 80 guns, constantly coming and going between Mazatlan, California, and other Mexican ports."<sup>2</sup>

During this long waiting "Commodore Sloat became greatly enfeebled in health, and a considerable number of the crew were on the sick list, unfit for duty, and even the wooden stocks of the anchors became rotten and worm eaten . . . and had to be replaced by others."

An extract of a letter from Lieutenant Radford to Lieutenant Missroon, Executive officer of the U. S. S. *Portsmouth*, written during that period, reads: "Mazatlan, the coast of Mexico, should be avoided from July until November by all Captains who wish

<sup>1</sup> Cutts: "Conquest of California and New Mexico."

<sup>2</sup> "Life of Rear Admiral John Drake Sloat."



to keep their crews in health and their vessels efficient. Heavy rains and squalls with the most terrific lightning then prevail. Frequently the winds are strong and on shore, which requires a smart vessel to take care of herself. However, that which is to be most dreaded on this coast is the sickly season as the fevers are deadly, and men the least exposed in the rivers or on shore are apt to lose their lives."

"At the commencement of the year 1846, the largest American fleet ever collected in that quarter was on the west coast of Mexico. The Pacific Squadron was then composed of the frigates *Savannah* of 52 guns; (the *Constitution* 50, and the *Congress*, 52 guns, under orders to join), the sloops of war *Portsmouth*, *Levant*, and *Cyane*, each of 22 guns, with the *Warren* of 24,—in all 244 guns and 2,210 officers and men. This gallant force anxiously awaited the arrival of the President's message to learn his views in regard to our Oregon and Mexican relations."<sup>1</sup>

Having received no further instructions from the U .S. Government since those delivered to him in Honolulu, Commodore Sloat, after passing the winter in a state of anxious uncertainty, was greatly gratified by Fleet Surgeon Wm. Maxwell Wood's offer of service for the perilous mission of obtaining news of a definite character; with which object in view Dr. Wood, accompanied by Mr. Wm. Parrott, U. S. Consul at Mazatlan, sailed in the *Warren* for San Blas. Reaching that port on May 4th, they thence set out upon the hazardous expedition which was to take them through the very heart of warring Mexico.

In Dr. Wood's own account of this adventurous undertaking we read: "We had penetrated five days' journey on horseback into Mexico, when, at the city of Guadalajara, we received the first intelligence of actual hostilities upon the Rio Grande, and procured a Mexican newspaper with the account of the capture

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Rear Admiral Sloat."

of Captain Thornton's detachment . . ." (April, 1846.) "I wrote Commodore Sloat a letter assuring him of the occurrence of hostilities, and sending him a translation of the account contained in the Mexican paper. Mr. Parrott, from his long established commercial relations with Guadalajara, found an opportunity of expressing my letter to the Commodore."

Not until after receiving news of the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, fought on May 8th and 9th, did Congress realize the fact that war between the United States and Mexico actually existed, and on May 13, 1846, the Secretary of the Navy wrote to inform Commodore Sloat that "the state of things alluded to in his letter of June 24, 1845," had occurred; that he should be governed by the instructions therein contained, and should "carry into effect the orders then communicated, with energy and promptitude."

On the 7th of June, 1846, Commodore Sloat took his gig and went on shore at Mazatlan to learn the very latest news. Receiving Dr. Wood's despatches he returned to the *Savannah* "with a look of grim determination in his eyes. The time had come to carry out the orders received so many months before."

"After taking on more water, on June 8th, Commodore Sloat, leaving the sloop of war *Warren* behind at Mazatlan to bring him later news and despatches, gave the final orders, and the frigate *Savannah*, the greyhound and fastest sailing vessel of war then in the world, was soon under a cloud of canvas and sailing at full speed for Monterey, where she arrived in just twenty-four days, on the 2nd of July, 1846, and where she found the *Cyane* and the *Levant* at anchor in the harbor awaiting the arrival of the Commander-in-Chief.

On July 6th, Commodore Sloat wrote to Commander J. B. Montgomery, U. S. S. *Portsmouth*, San Francisco:

“Flagship *Savannah*, Monterey.

“Since I wrote you last evening, I have determined to hoist the flag of the United States at this place tomorrow, as I would prefer being sacrificed for doing too much than too little.

“If you consider you have sufficient force, or if Fremont will join you, you will hoist the flag of the United States at Yerba Buena, or any other proper place, and take possession, in the name of the United States, of the fort, and that portion of the country.

“I send you a copy of my summons to the military commandant of Monterey to surrender the place, and also my proclamation to the people of California, which you will have translated into Spanish, and promulgate many copies in both languages. . . .”

On the morning of June 7th, Capt. Wm. Mervine of the *Savannah*, was sent to demand the immediate surrender of Monterey. By ten o'clock, “the necessary force of 250 seamen and marines were landed under command of Captain Mervine, and were marched to the custom-house, where Commodore Sloat’s proclamation was read, the standard of the United States hoisted amid three hearty cheers by the troops and foreigners present, and a salute of twenty-one guns fired by all the ships.”

Commander Montgomery received Commodore Sloat’s order on the 8th, and at 8 o’clock the next morning he landed at Yerba Buena with seventy seamen and marines, hoisted the American flag in the public square, with twenty-one guns from the sloop-of-war *Portsmouth*, and amid cheers from all quarters addressed the people, and posted the proclamation on the flagstaff.

On the 11th, Commander Montgomery informed Commodore Sloat that the flag of the United States was then flying at Yerba Buena, at Sutter’s Fort on the Sacramento, at Bodega on the

coast, and at Sonoma, and adds, "the protection of person and property which our flag promises to California and its inhabitants, seems to be generally hailed with satisfaction."

In a general order read on board the *Savannah* in the harbor of Monterey, July 15, 1846, Commodore Sloat announces "to the Officers, Seamen and Marines under his command, that he has received official information that the flag of the United States is now flying at Yerba Buena, Sutter's Fort, Saucelito, Sonoma and Bodega, and that the forces of the United States have quiet possession of the magnificent Bay of San Francisco and all the country within one hundred miles around, to the manifest satisfaction of the inhabitants, many of whom have enrolled themselves under our flag and officers for its protection. . . . He congratulates each one under his command that it has fallen to his lot to have participated in the honor and glory of placing the country under the flag of the United States, and in a position to be governed by their equitable and impartial laws."

On the 16th, the British Admiral, Sir George Seymour, arrived in the *Collingwood* at Monterey. There is an interesting account of this event given in Major Edwin A. Sherman's "Life of Rear Admiral J. D. Sloat." The story is told by the Commodore himself as follows:

"When the British line-of-battle ship *Collingwood* arrived, there were the two frigates *Savannah* and *Congress*, and the two sloops-of-war *Cyane* and *Levant* of my squadron at anchor, with a battery of 42-pounders on shore being constructed. The *Collingwood* anchored within pistol-shot of the *Savannah*. That ship with the others was ready for action; the decks were cleared, anchors hove short, the matches were lighted, and the gunners stood by loaded cannon; the yards were full of men ready to drop the sails on the instant of a signal. In fact, we did everything but show our teeth—run the guns out of the port-holes!



The practical eye of the Admiral could not but observe the preparations for immediate action."

"You seem to be about to give your men some practice in the art of gunnery," said the Admiral as he shook hands with the Commodore. Sloat pointed to the flag on shore and remarked that he "did not know but it would take some practice to keep it there."

"Will you answer me candidly one question?" asked the Admiral, "Did you get any despatches through Mexico, just before you left Mazatlan?"

"*I did not*," was the prompt answer from Sloat.

After a moment's study, the Admiral said: "You did right, perhaps, and your Government will sustain you as the case now stands; but don't you know, Commodore, that there is not an officer in the British Navy who would have dared to take the responsibility you have done? You doubtless had orders to take Monterey in case of war, but when you left Mazatlan, there were only a few leading Mexicans and myself who knew of the existence of hostilities. It is all over now," he continued; "but tell me, Commodore, since you are not a man to shrink from responsibility, what would you have done, had there been, when you reached here, the flag of another nationality floating where yours now floats, and that flag guarded by a ship of the line?"

"I would," said Commodore Sloat, "have fired at least one shot at it, and perhaps have gone to the bottom, and left my Government to settle the matter as it thought best."

On the afternoon of July 5th, the *Congress* had arrived, under command of Commodore Stockton.

"On the 23rd," reports Commodore Sloat, "I directed Commodore Stockton to assume command of the forces and operations on shore, and, on the 29th, having determined to return to the United States via Panama, I hoisted my broad pennant on board the *Levant*, and sailed for Mazatlan and Panama, leav-

ing the remainder of the squadron under his command, believing that no further opposition would be made to our taking possession of the whole of the Californias, (as General Castro had less than one hundred men), and that I could render much more important service by returning to the United States with the least possible delay, to explain to the Government the situation and wants of that country, than I could by remaining in command, in my infirm state of health."

The report from which these extracts are taken was written on board the *Levant* while at sea, on July 31, 1846, on his return home. After crossing the Isthmus on mule-back, Commodore Sloat embarked at Chagres for the nearest foreign port from whence he could obtain passage for the United States, and arrived at Washington early in November, 1846.

Before passing on to the next chapter, we will revert to Fleet Surgeon Wm. Maxwell Wood, both in connection with Commodore Sloat and with Lieutenant Radford.

Said Commodore Sloat, in his letter of March 20, 1855, writing from New York to Dr. Wood:

"I am most happy to acknowledge the very important services you have rendered the Government and the Squadron in the Pacific under my command at the breaking out of the Mexican War. The information you furnished me at Mazatlan from Gaudalaxara (at the risk of your life) *was the only reliable information I received of that event, and which induced me to proceed immediately to California, and upon my own responsibility to take possession of that country.* I have always considered the performance of your journey through Mexico at the time as an extraordinary feat, requiring great presence of mind and address. How you escaped from the heart of an enemy's country and such a people, has always been a wonder to me, and has been so characterized on all occasions."

In a letter dated "New York, October 9, 1855," Lieutenant Radford writes:

"In our conversation a few days since relative to the information you furnished Commodore Sloat, of the Pacific Squadron, from Gaudalaxara, at the commencement of the Mexican War, I stated, and am still under the firm belief, it was of infinite service to the country; more especially as the Commodore states in his letter to you his prompt action in taking California was induced from yours, the only reliable information he had received.

"It was reported at Mazatlan, where our small Squadron was anchored that the English Admiral was waiting off San Blas for permission from the Mexican Government to hoist the English Protectorate flag in California; consequently immediate action was—in my opinion—of vital importance.

"Yours truly,

"Wm. Radford,

"Lt. U. S. Navy."

"Dr. Wm. Maxwell Wood,

"U. S. Navy."

(Commodore Robert F. Stockton, to whom Commodore Sloat turned over his command, was born in 1795, at Princeton, N. J., and became a midshipman in the U. S. Navy, September, 1, 1811; served in the War of 1812, and the expedition against Algiers; although in the naval service, he was always active in politics, but frequently changed his party allegiance. He declined the post of Secretary of the Navy, offered him by President Tyler. Three years after his California experience he left the Navy and the next year was elected U. S. Senator from New Jersey, but resigned after a short service in the Senate. He was prominently mentioned for the Democratic nomination for President in 1856. He died October 7, 1866.)

## CHAPTER X

### THE "MALEK ADHEL"

WE have last seen the *Warren* on June 8, 1846, left behind at Mazatlan for the purpose of bringing the latest news to the Commander-in-Chief. A month and more she waited, and finally, on July 15th, set sail for Monterey bearing important despatches.

In her log of August 13, 1846, we find "On our arrival at Monterey discovered that the Amer. Ensign was flying at the Custom House and Barracks on shore—California having been taken possession of and annexed to the U. States on the 7th day of July, 1846, by proclamation of Commodore John D. Sloat, U. S. Navy.

"W. H. Montgomery,

"Act. Master."

The officers of the *Warren* likewise found, upon arriving at Monterey, that Commodore Stockton had, on July 23rd, assumed the command of the United States forces on the Pacific Station.

Merely touching at Monterey the *Warren* turned south again to the port of San Pedro, and there Captain Hull received the following order:

"Ciudad de los Angeles, August 20, 1846.

"Sir,

"As soon as the U. S. S. *Warren* under your command is ready for sea you will proceed immediately to blockade the port of Mazatlan. . . . You will capture all vessels under the Mexican flag that you may be able to take.

"R. F. Stockton."

"Commander Joseph B. Hull, U. S. S. *Warren*,

"Bay of San Pedro."



In a report to the Hon. George Bancroft, Secretary of the Navy, dated August 22, 1846, Commodore Stockton writes: "The *Warren* and *Cyane* will sail today to blockade the west coast of Mexico;" and, "Three days since I received the President's Proclamation by the U. S. S. *Warren* from Mazatlan."

The *Warren* reached Mazatlan on her return journey at an early hour on the morning of September 7th, and finding there a Mexican brig anchored in the roadstead, Captain Hull immediately proceeded to carry out the Commodore's instructions.

"At 5.30," reads the log for that date, "hoisted out the boats and got 300 fathom line in the launch;" then, "From 8 to meridian made preparations for cutting out a Mexican Brig." . . . All being in readiness the *Warren* filled away and stood in abreast of the town of Mazatlan. Anchoring in four fathoms of water, the starboard batteries were brought to bear upon the town, and the ship prepared for action. The launch, first, second, and third cutters were then manned and armed, and set off under the command of Lieutenant Radford to cut out the Mexican brig *Malek Adhel*."

That the action was no prolonged affair is shown by the log entry: "At 2.50 hoisted the American flag, (on the brig,) weighed her anchor and commenced kedging her to the ship."

The account given by my father of that event was the record of one who never failed to see the amusing side of any matter.

The hour chosen for the attack proved to be that of the daily *siesta*, and the assaulting party, boarding the brig unopposed, had securely fastened down the hatches before the astonished Mexicans had realized their plight.

Having assured himself of the enemy's effective confinement below decks, and placed a coxswain and handful of men as guard aboard the brig, Lieutenant Radford ordered the crews back into the boats and proceeded to kedge the prize out toward the *Warren*.

What transpired on board during that time was gathered later through a close questioning of the coxswain.

Discovering—possibly by intuitive perception—that the Mexican officers were discussing the contents of a bottle in the cabin, the coxswain (by his own account), suddenly appeared in their midst, and whirling his cutlass above his head and theirs, helped himself to a rousing bumper of the fiery beverage, after which, with another flourish of the cutlass, he departed. So well pleased was he with the success of this experiment that, shortly afterward, he decided to repeat it, and there is no knowing to what lengths things might have gone had not a breeze, springing up, brought the boat crews back on board, who, hoisting the sails on the brig, proceeded to finish their course in swifter fashion.

During all this time they were under a lively fire from the shore, and as the commander of the expedition was standing on the brig's deck watching the distant batteries through marine glasses, the coxswain (a sturdy young Irishman on whose brain the Mexican fire-water was having its effect) turned his eyes in the direction in which the officer was apparently gazing, and noting two young Mexican girls standing on a nearer wharf, he stepped up and, touching his cap, exclaimed: "If the Lieutenant plazes, I'll swim ashore and bring off the two Señoritas."

This same coxswain was of a fine Irish type, and faithfully fulfilled his duty when not under the influence of liquor. But so strong a hold had this, his besetting sin, taken upon him that hardly a week passed without his being up for punishment; in fact his acquaintance with the "cat" had grown to be one of more than ordinary intimacy. Flogging for certain offenses was the rule of the service, and an officer had no choice in the matter. At all the floggings, every one who could be spared from duty was obliged to be present.

Determined to break the lad (whose sterling qualities he had noted) of these habits, Lieutenant Radford called him one day into his cabin, and said: "Malone," (I do not recall his name, but this will answer), "I see you're up for punishment again this week. Now I'm getting tired of this thing, and I'm *not going* to have you punished today; but I tell you the very next time your name is up I'll have you keel-hauled, and see if *that* will set you straight." This was a terrible threat, for it meant having him drawn under the ship's keel by a rope, and might even result in drowning; nor can I imagine that under any circumstances would it have been carried into effect. But it made the desired impression, as from that day Malone changed his habits and became a steady and reliable man. He followed Lieutenant Radford in many of his cruises, going as coxswain of his gig, and later of his barge when a Rear Admiral.

But we have wandered far from the Mexican brig, on which, at 2.50 o'clock, the American flag was hoisted. "At 4.50," reads the *Warren's* log, "got under way and stood out—at 5 took the prize in tow."

The *Malek Adhel* was then anchored near the *Warren* and a crew of twelve men in charge of a boatswain put aboard her.

The following day, at 5.30 A.M., according to the log entry, another Mexican brig was discovered endeavoring to enter the harbor of Mazatlan, and the second and third cutters under the command of Lieutenant Radford, cut out the brig *Carmelita*, anchored her near the *Warren*, and left Midshipman O. Crane in charge of her with four men and two marines.

That the *Malek Adhel* was, however, the important prize, is shown by the great interchange of correspondence concerning her capture. She was a brig of war, and the largest vessel in the Mexican Navy. The prisoners taken aboard her were sent to the English brig *Frolic*, for passage on shore.

A letter from Captain Hull to Commodore Stockton, dated "U. S. S. *Warren*, September 12, 1846," reads in part: "I have the honor of sending to you by Lieutenant Renshaw the celebrated brig *Malek Adhel*, taken in the harbor of Mazatlan on the 7th instant. . . ."

Joseph Bartine Hull, a nephew of Commodore Isaac Hull, was born in Westchester, New York, April 26, 1802, appointed midshipman November 9, 1813, and ordered to Navy Yard, Portsmouth, N. H. He joined the frigate *Congress*; went to Holland and the Mediterranean, in 1815; returning, joined Commodore Bainbridge's squadron, Mediterranean, 1816-17; Pacific Squadron, 1823. Commissioned commander, September 8, 1841. In command of sloop *Warren*, Pacific 1843-6 to October, 1847—returning via Panama. While in command of the *Warren* off Mazatlan he sent in a boat expedition under Lieutenant Radford to cut out the Mexican gun-brig *Malek Adhel*, which was successfully done; was in command of the Northern District of California for a short period before the close of the Mexican War. Commissioned captain, September 14, 1855. In command of the *Savannah*, Coast Blockade, June to September, 1861. Commodore, July 16, 1862.

Commodore Stockton's report reads:

"As soon as the *Malek Adhel* was seized the authorities enforced the order requiring all Americans to retire 20 leagues into the interior or embark within 4 days; great excitement prevailed on shore, and threats were made against Americans, but no violence was committed beyond the temporary confinement of Mr. Mott, who was liberated through the intercession of Captain Hamilton (English) to whom I am much indebted for his services on the occasion and to whom I thought it proper to address a letter of thanks."





COLONEL STEPHEN WATTS KEARNY

Later, General in the Mexican War and Active in the Conquest of California



On November 23, 1846, Commodore Stockton writes to the Secretary of the Navy from San Diego:

"By the celebrated Mexican armed brig, *Malek Adhel*, which was captured and taken out of the Harbor of Mazatlan by the boats of the U. S. S. *Warren*, I have the honor to send this despatch to you as far as Mazatlan, and to say that several other vessels, perhaps 13 or 14, have been captured by the *Cyane* and *Warren*, official reports of which however have not yet reached me, but I have reason to hope and believe that every vessel by which our commerce in this ocean could probably be interrupted has been captured by Commander Hull in the *Warren*, or Commander Dupont in the *Cyane*. Those officers deserve praise for the manner in which they have blockaded and watched the Mexican coast during the most inclement season of the year. . . ."

A note amongst my father's papers in his own handwriting, reads: "*Malek Adhel*—Saracen—and brother to the great Saladin; Chief who opposed Richard Cœur-de-Lion on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land." (El-Melik-El-Adel.)

Besides the *Malek Adhel* and *Carmelita* taken in the harbor of Mazatlan, I find a list of eight schooners and brigantines taken as prizes by the *Warren* one week later in the harbor of La Paz, and as many more were taken by the *Cyane*.

## CHAPTER XI

### CALIFORNIA

IN 1835 Texas revolted against Mexican rule and under the leadership of an eccentric character, Sam Houston, gained its independence at San Jacinto in 1836, becoming the "Lone Star" Republic with Houston as its first President.

Dreading Mexican reprisals, Texas asked the protection of the United States, but this was warily refused until after eight years had passed when, on March 1, 1844, by a joint resolution of Congress, Texas was admitted to the Union.

As every one knew would be the case, war with Mexico immediately followed, since this last named government would neither acknowledge the independence of Texas, nor accept the Rio Grande as the southern boundary.

Not, however, until four days after the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma had been fought (May 8 and 9, 1846) did President Polk and Congress declare that "war exists between the United States and Mexico."

The Bear Flag Republic, which was proclaimed at Sonoma on June 14, 1846, had been speedily dissolved; the raising of the American flag, at Monterey and other places in California, proving the death knell of this incipient revolution. Nevertheless, the Californians were known to be still "boiling with fury over the indignities in the North . . ." where, Fremont had taken "prisoner the *comandante militar* and other Californians, had hauled down the Mexican flag and elevated their own, and proclaimed a republic, besides shooting three California soldiers



in cold blood, and all unprovoked," all of which "seemed to them a wanton insult, and aroused in them a deeper indignation than if Sloat had bombarded Monterey." <sup>1</sup>

In Commodore Stockton's report dated, "Ciudad de los Angeles, August 28, 1846," from which we have already quoted, we read: "On the day after I took command, I organized the 'California battalion of mounted riflemen,' by the appointment of all the necessary officers, and received them as volunteers into the service of the United States. Captain Fremont was appointed major, and Lieutenant Gillespie captain of the battalion. . . .

"On the 13th of August, having been joined by Major Fremont with about eighty riflemen, and M. Larkin, late American consul, we entered this famous 'City of the Angels,' the capital of the Californias, and took unmolested possession of the government house."

Early in September Fremont went north with a force of forty men, intending to recruit and return immediately. Commodore Stockton withdrew all his forces and proceeded with the squadron to San Francisco, leaving Captain Gillespie in command of the Pueblo de los Angeles, with about thirty riflemen.

Hardly, however, had Commodore Stockton arrived at San Francisco than he received information that all the country south of Monterey was in arms, and the Mexican flag again hoisted. Briefly, the Californians rebelled and, on the 23rd of September, invested the "City of the Angels," where Captain Gillespie, finding himself and his few men overpowered by fully three hundred Californians, capitulated on the 30th. He thence retired, with all the foreigners, aboard a sloop-of-war lying at San Pedro, and sailed for Monterey. A state of warfare was thus inaugurated which "was kept up, principally, south of

<sup>1</sup> Gertrude Atherton: "California."

Monterey, and continued until the arrival of General Kearny, when the brilliant events which led to the final conquest of California took place."<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the autumn of 1846 the U. S. Squadron cruised actively along the whole western coast of Mexico, blockading all her ports.

On November 8th, the *Warren* anchored off Yerba Buena (the fortified settlement of San Francisco), which town was rapidly becoming an important place. It was already being laid out in lots and squares, and a newspaper called *The California Star*, had been started by S. Brannon, the leader of the Mormon immigrants.

From the *Warren's* log we learn that her officers and crew were actively engaged in the incessant warfare of the time. Marines and sailors were constantly being sent to relieve the barracks or the block house, and an entry of December 12th reads: "At 5.30 received intelligence that the enemy intended an attack on the town (Yerba Buena); armed the boats and sent them ashore in charge of Lieutenant Radford accompanied by Lieutenant Rutledge, Midshipman J. G. Whitaker and other officers. Left the ship in charge of Midshipman De Bree, with ten men."

On this same date, December 12, 1846, General S. W. Kearny, who had left Fort Leavenworth the preceding July, reached San Diego, and as his coming was destined to have a great influence upon the history of the country as well as upon Lieutenant Radford's movements, we give an account of this expedition as portrayed by Valentine Mott Porter, Vice-President of the Missouri Historical Society.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. M. Cutts: "Conquest of California."

<sup>2</sup> The Paper from which this account is taken was read before the Historical Society of Southern California, February 6, 1911, and is entitled: "General Stephen W. Kearny, and the Conquest of California."

At the opening of the Mexican War, General (then Colonel) Kearny was at Fort Leavenworth in command of the First Regiment of United States Dragoons. The Administration, having in mind the acquisition of the far western country, appointed Kearny to command an overland military expedition for the capture of New Mexico and California. Before he could reach the coast, but after he was well on his way thither, certain early steps in the struggle had been taken. In order fully to appreciate his part in it, it will be advantageous to see what had already been done in California toward throwing off the Mexican rule, while he and his cavalcade were crossing the plains.

Capt. J. C. Fremont, of the United States Topographical Engineers, had been for some time prior to the outbreak of the war engaged in exploration in the Sacramento Valley. (John C. Fremont was born in 1813 at Savannah, Ga.; entered Charleston College, from which he was expelled; became a teacher of mathematics in the Navy in 1833; after a cruise of two and a half years he was elevated to a professorship, which evidence of learning moved his former college to give him an A.B. and A.M.; resigned from the Navy and was engaged upon railroad engineering work until appointed a second lieutenant in the Topographical Engineers, U. S. A., 1838; brevetted captain in 1844 for gallant and highly meritorious services in two expeditions to the Rocky Mountains; organized the California Battalion of Volunteers in 1846, serving as major thereof by appointment of Commodore Stockton; commissioned lieutenant colonel in the Mounted Rifle Regiment, U. S. A., 1846; sided with Commodore Stockton in controversy with General Kearny; was court martialed, and sentenced to be dismissed from the Army for disobedience to orders; the sentence was commuted, but he resigned from the service in 1848, and engaged again in exploring work, reaching California in 1849; was elected U. S. Senator from

California in 1850, for a short term; nominated for President by the new Republican party in 1856; appointed major general of volunteers May 14, 1861; resigned June 4, 1864, without having performed any Civil War service of distinction; thereafter engaged in speculations which gradually impoverished him. He was appointed Governor of Arizona in 1878, serving for a brief term; placed on the Army retired list as major general by special act of Congress, in 1890, and died July 13th of the same year.

His work of exploration completed he was about returning to the East, when he received information that decided him to remain in what might become an interesting theatre of military operations. At Sonoma, above the Bay of San Francisco, a party of adventurous settlers, chiefly Americans, had revolted against Mexico and raised a standard of their own, known as the "Bear Flag." They made overtures to Fremont to join with them, but at the beginning they did not obtain his open support. Gradually, though, he became more and more identified, at least in the minds of the people of the country, with this irregular movement. While not openly espousing the Bear Flag cause, it is certain that he gave encouragement to some of the aggressions perpetrated under that symbol.

Commodore John D. Sloat, of the United States Navy, having been advised that, in case he heard of a declaration of war between Mexico and the United States, he was to seize the ports on the California coast, but unless driven thereto was not to attack the government of California, found his task made the harder for the reason that the filibustering activities of Fremont added to the outrages perpetrated by the Bear Flag men, had weakened the confidence of the natives in the professed good faith of the Americans.

By Commodore Sloat's orders the Stars and Stripes were run up at Monterey on July 7, 1846, and two days later at Yerba



Buena. At the same time the Bear Flag came down at Sonoma and was replaced by the American standard. Commodore Stockton, who succeeded Sloat, within a few days after the flag was raised, was not content merely to hold the seaports, and after a conference with Fremont he decided to abandon any conciliatory attitude. He had already accepted a tender of services from Fremont and his improvised force from the north, made up of some of the Bear Flag men and of newly arrived immigrants, which was designated as the "California Battalion of Mounted Riflemen." This command was embarked for San Diego for the purpose of cutting off the retreat of General José Castro (the Mexican military commandante at Monterey) to the south, a plan that in the turn of events proved ineffective. Stockton himself sailed for San Pedro, the port of Los Angeles, where he landed a force of sailors and marines, with some small cannon. General Castro and Governor Pio Pico at Los Angeles made a show of preparation for defense, but realizing that they could not successfully repel the invaders they tried to open negotiations with Stockton. They felt that in view of the conciliatory attitude of Sloat, his predecessor, there might be some chance for an adjustment. Commodore Stockton, however, was not the kind of man to yield an inch of glory. Caring little for the feelings of the Californians, he treated their messengers disdainfully, and demanded an unconditional surrender. As Castro and Pico could not comply without loss of honor they decided, not to resist, but to throw over the cause of the Californians and bolt, whereupon they headed for Mexico, leaving the Californians to shift for themselves. Major Fremont and his battalion having marched up from San Diego and joined the Commodore and men from the fleet, the united force, on August 13th, entered Los Angeles without hindrance.

Having now completed, as he thought, the conquest of the

country, Commodore Stockton sent Kit Carson, the scout, on an overland trip to Washington, bearing the tidings of the acquisition of California. Four days after the occupation of Los Angeles, Commodore Stockton first learned authoritatively that war had been officially declared between the United States and Mexico. So far he had been acting on the strength of information of hostilities gained by his predecessor. Yet he had apparently completed the task that he had set out to perform. Nothing remained to be done but to garrison the important places. Detachments for this purpose were drawn from Fremont's battalion. Stockton and Fremont then departed for the north, the one by sea, the other by land. Lieutenant Gillespie, of the Marine Corps, with fifty men, was left in charge at Los Angeles. Not only was this force inadequate to hold in subjection a people whose unrest was increasing, but Gillespie himself was not a man fitted for the place. Arrogant, exacting, with intensified Anglo-Saxon inaptitude in dealing with alien peoples, he quickly had the town flaming with wrath and indignation.

The result of Gillespie's intolerance at Los Angeles started up the first vehement opposition to the Americans. Leaders came forward in the persons of José M. Flores and Andrés Pico, a brother of Governor Pio Pico. After a short but exciting siege Gillespie was forced to quit Los Angeles and withdraw to Monterey. The whole southern country was quickly reclaimed by its real owners, and the "conquest," proclaimed by Stockton and Fremont in the letters to Washington, was now undone. Worse than that, the people were now thoroughly aroused. To overcome them again would mean much hard fighting, compared with which the bloodless conquest just annulled was but child's play. The Americans faced a situation less favorable than when they began. The real task was ahead of them. Commodore Stockton, who so far had not lacked confidence or energy, prepared to

grapple with it. He sent Captain Mervine, of the Navy, and a force of marines to the port of San Pedro with orders to march upon and recapture Los Angeles. The advance of Mervine's party was stopped at Dominguez' Rancho. In the engagement that ensued several of his men were killed and he was obliged to fall back with his force to San Pedro. Stockton in his flagship, the *Congress*, arrived there two weeks later, on October 23rd. He had now altogether at this port eight hundred men, but, notwithstanding this fact, he decided it would be impracticable to march thirty miles to Los Angeles to make another attempt at its recapture, and, assigning as a reason the superiority of the harbor as a base, he determined to attack by way of San Diego! The following month or so was devoted to preparations for a resumption of the campaign, but news was expected any day that Fremont had arrived at Los Angeles and settled with the enemy. Fremont, however, was taking his time on his southward journey, caution requiring him to march by the difficult mountainous route instead of the quicker shore way. As late as Christmas day he had gotten no farther than the pass above Santa Barbara.

Such, then, was the situation in December, 1846, when Brigadier-General Kearny and his escort of dragoons approached the eastern gate of California, after an arduous march over the desert from Santa Fé. Before going further let us see what he had been doing so that we may appreciate his present situation.

(Stephen Watts Kearny was born in 1794 at Newark, N. J.; educated at Columbia College, New York; appointed First Lieutenant 13th Infantry, U. S. A., March 12, 1812; served in the war of 1812; became Captain April 1, 1813; received brevet as Major in 1823 for ten years' faithful service in one grade; Major, 3rd Infantry, 1829; when the First Regiment of dragoons [later known as the First Cavalry] was organized. In 1833, he was made its Lieutenant Colonel, and entrusted with the task of devis-

ing a system of cavalry tactics for this new arm of the service. He was thus the father of our present cavalry service. The regiment became the model corps of the Army. He was Colonel in command from 1836 to 1846, and during this time made many remote expeditions to the Indian tribes, over which he acquired great personal influence. Among the Osages, Kansas, and kindred tribes he was known as *Shonga Kahega Mahetonga* [The Horse-Chief of the Long Knives]. He served in nearly every frontier army post from the northern to the southern border, and more than one he himself built. In the Mexican War he was given command of the "Army of the West," was promoted to Brigadier General; he marched overland and conducted the western operations, taking possession of New Mexico and completing the conquest of California; was brevetted Major General for gallant and meritorious conduct in this region, to date from the battle of San Pascual, December, 1846; was Military and Civil Governor of California in 1847, of Vera Cruz, March, 1848, and of the City of Mexico, May, 1848. He died October 31st of the same year.)

Kearny had left Fort Leavenworth with a force approximating fifteen hundred men, consisting of Missouri Volunteers and a portion of his regiment of dragoons, and known as the "Army of the West." The march across the plains and over the mountains was one of the most hazardous and romantic undertakings in military annals, as much of the region traversed was practically devoid of wood and water. Although traders' caravans had been able to go back and forth over the trail to Santa Fé, living on the game shot from day to day, it was far more difficult for an army to subsist in the same way, it not being possible to carry along sufficient commissary stores for the entire march. The troops reached Santa Fé on August 18th—a march of a thousand miles in thirty-four days. Santa Fé, the seat of government



of New Mexico and the leading trading-post in the southwest, was occupied "without firing a gun or spilling a drop of blood." As soon as the General had taken formal possession of the territory in the name of the United States, established a civil government, and conciliated the inhabitants, he turned his eyes toward the Pacific, his ultimate destination being Monterey. He took with him three hundred dragoons, who must have presented a striking appearance in their shabby patched clothing and mounted on mules, because it was believed that horses could not travel to California and that even if they could, they probably would be less serviceable there than mules.

He set out on September 25th. His orders were to gain possession of California, co-operating for that purpose with the naval forces, which probably would be found in possession of the seaports, and having effected a conquest of the country he was to organize a civil government. There would follow him to California additional troops, consisting of an infantry battalion of five hundred Mormon volunteers, a regiment of New York volunteers, and a company of regular artillery, which were en route by sea. It was also contemplated to send later Col. Sterling Price and his regiment of Missouri volunteers, who had not yet arrived at Santa Fé. The whole force, it was believed, would be ample to annex and hold California.

General Kearny's column on October 6th, when near Socorro, New Mexico, met Kit Carson, the scout, on his way to Washington with despatches from Stockton and Fremont announcing the acquisition of California and the complete subjugation of its inhabitants. In consequence of this news Kearny felt it would be unnecessary and unwise to take with him so large a force, especially as the other troops en route by sea, would serve all needful purposes. The war was still in progress in old Mexico, and it seemed good policy to leave at Santa Fé as many men as could

be spared. So the General sent back two hundred of the dragoons, retaining one hundred as a personal escort rather than as a force likely to be called upon to battle with the enemy. Notwithstanding the changed situation on the coast he felt in duty bound to continue his march thither, because his orders required him to take command of the Department of California and to establish a government for the inhabitants. As the party had still to traverse the most difficult and least known region, the General prudently decided to utilize the services of Kit Carson as a guide, and to forward his despatches by other hands. Carson strongly protested against having to turn back and retrace his journey, for he was expecting to see his family in a few days more. Kearny probably disliked to inconvenience Carson, but military necessity justified it.

The party, now greatly diminished in numbers, resumed the march and soon found itself beset with hardships more severe than any yet experienced, the greatest suffering being from the lack of provisions and water. By the time the Colorado River was reached, on November 22nd, many of the animals had been lost, some had been eaten, and the rest were in bad condition. Most of the men were obliged to trudge along on foot. Near the junction of the Colorado and Gila rivers they found the remains of a camp and the recent evidence of many horses, at least a thousand, as they estimated, which led them to believe that they had come upon the trail of General Castro, and that he was returning from Mexico with a fresh army to drive out the Americans. Kearny felt that his own party was too small to be able to resist an attack, and that the only way to take the enemy at a disadvantage would be to attack him, by surprise if possible. If Castro's camp could be found he would fall upon it the moment night set in, with the darkness concealing his own weakness. The reconnoissance that he immediately ordered to be made, revealed

not Castro but a small party of Mexicans on their way to Sonora with five hundred horses from California. The dragoons thought they saw a chance to get some remounts, but to their disappointment the horses proved to be unbroken and few of them were of much use. On the next day they captured a Mexican courier bearing mail from the coast. They then got the first intelligence that the Californians had risen and under Florés had expelled the Americans from Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and other places. Accustomed to Mexican exaggeration, they took this news with a grain of salt, but at the same time they felt that something serious might have happened. On December 2nd, at Warner's Rancho, the extreme eastern settlement of California, they received further reports, seemingly more reliable, that the Californians were in possession of practically the whole southern country, except the port of San Diego. General Kearny thereupon despatched a note to Commodore Stockton, asking him if possible to "send a party to open communication with us on the route to this place and to inform me of the state of affairs in California." The Commodore's reply, sent the next day, was as follows:

"Headquarters, S. Diego, December 3d, 6.30 P.M.

"Sir,

"I have this moment received your note of yesterday by Mr. Stokes, and have ordered Captain Gillespie with a detachment of mounted riflemen and a field piece to proceed to your camp without delay. Captain G. is well informed in relation to the present state of things in California, and will give you all needful information. I need not therefore detain him by saying anything on the subject. I will merely state that I have this evening received information by two deserters from the rebel camp of the arrival of an additional force of 100 men, which, in addition to the force previously here, makes their number about 150.

I send with Captain G., as a guide, one of the deserters, that you may make inquiries of him, and, if you see fit, endeavor to surprise them. Faithfully your obedient servant,

“ Robt. F. Stockton,

“ Commander-in-Chief and Governor of the Territory of California, etc.”

In his report to the Secretary of the Navy, of February 18, 1848, Commodore Stockton states that the volunteer party accompanying Gillespie consisted of Acting Lieutenant Beale, Passed Midshipman Duncan, ten carbineers from the U. S. S. *Congress*, Captain Gibson, and twenty-five of the California Battalion of Volunteers.

They reached Kearny on the 5th, when he was about forty miles from San Diego, and brought him the first advices of the presence of the enemy in that direction. Although the dragoons were pretty well used up after their toilsome overland march, the prospect of trying conclusions with the foe gave them new ardor. A reconnaissance developed that a force of the enemy was then at the village of San Pascual, about three leagues distant, and, owing to the fact that the reconnoitering party had accidentally revealed itself to the enemy, it was thought advisable to attack, and to force a passage to San Diego. It was then after midnight, and the call to horse was at once sounded. The column was arranged in the following order: an advance guard of twelve dragoons under Capt. A. R. Johnston, mounted on the best horses available; the General, with Lieutenants Emory and Warner, of the Topographical Engineers, fifty dragoons under Captain Moore, nearly all mounted on the tired and stiff mules which they had ridden from Santa Fé, and about twenty of the California detachment of dragoons under Lieutenant Davidson, in charge of two mountain howitzers. The rest of the men, in-



cluding those from the fleet, were in the rear with Major Swords and the baggage train.

(Lieutenant Emory, the topographical officer and diarist of the expedition, was brevetted Captain for his gallantry at San Pascual. He had a distinguished Army service, rising to be Major-General of Volunteers in the Civil War. He retired from the Army as Brigadier-General in 1876, and died at Washington in 1887. W. H. Warner, junior topographical officer of the party, was also brevetted for gallantry at San Pascual, and was killed in 1849 by hostile Indians in the Sierra Nevada; being then a captain. Major Thomas Swords, of the Quartermaster's Department, rose to be one of the best-known officers in his department, receiving the brevet of Major-General for faithful and efficient service during the Civil War. He retired from the Army in 1869, and died in 1886.)

The night was intensely disagreeable on account of the cold and rain, and the clothes of the men were thoroughly soaked. They had covered the nine miles of hilly country before the break of dawn and found themselves at San Pascual in sight of the enemy. Capt. Andrés Pico, in command of the hostile force, had counted on being able to withdraw to some favorable cover, from which to make a dash at the Americans, whose number he had overestimated, but seeing only a score of horsemen (the advance guard) coming toward him, he resolved to make a stand. His men fired a volley and poised their lances to receive the charge of the dragoons. At the discharge Captain Johnston fell with a musket ball in his forehead. Then came the clash. In the hand-to-hand encounter, the advance guard would soon have been overwhelmed, had not the main party come into view. Pico's men now turned and fled, pursued by the Americans strung out at uneven distances, owing to the inequalities of their mounts. Those on the fresh horses naturally got far in the lead,

while those on the poor mules fell behind. Pico's men, all skilful riders and well mounted, were quick-witted enough to see the vulnerability of the American situation. Deftly turning in their tracks they rushed back to engage in detail. The renewed action was brief but bloody. Firearms were discarded because empty or rain-soaked. The fight was one of saber against lance, the Americans on broken-down mules or half-broken horses, the Californians on trained fresh steeds, an unequal contest from every standpoint. Our men fought with great bravery against great odds and the General himself was in the thick of the *mêlée*. Few of those in front escaped injury; he received two ugly lance-wounds, and might have been killed but for the timely aid of Lieutenant Emory, who put a pistol ball through his assailant as he was about to make another thrust. For about five minutes the Californians held their ground, but when they saw the howitzer detachment coming up they fled the field, this time not to return.

The Americans, left in possession of the battle-ground, were in no condition to pursue, and went into camp. Their casualties, as finally determined, were eighteen killed, nineteen wounded, and one missing. On the enemy's side at least a dozen were wounded, but how many were killed, if any, is not known.

The numbers engaged in the fight at San Pascual raises a question as to the accuracy of the historian H. H. Bancroft, who would like to convey the impression that Kearny's effectives in the fight outnumbered those of the enemy. He overlooks the fact that fifty or sixty of the party were a mile in the rear with the baggage train, under the quartermaster, Major Swords, and consequently were never engaged, and that the howitzer detachment came up after the assault and did not get into the action because its appearance had caused the enemy to retire. The number of Americans actually engaged was probably between eighty and

ninety, and because of circumstances already noticed, the brunt must have fallen on still fewer, that is, on the advance guard and the main party, who of course were considerably outnumbered. But it is General Kearny's statement of the enemy's number that appears particularly to arouse Mr. Bancroft's scorn. Said Kearny in his report: "The enemy proved to be a party of about 160 Californians under Andrés Pico."

Shortly after the fight authentic accounts were received "that his (Pico's) number was 180 men engaged in the fight, and that 100 additional men were sent from the Pueblo (de los Angeles), which reached his camp on the 7th." This is taken from the official notes of Lieutenant Emory, of the Topographical Engineers, whose account of the whole campaign was published by the government and has always been regarded as reliable authority.

In consequence of General Kearny's wounds Capt. H. S. Turner was placed temporarily in command. He despatched a report of the situation to Commodore Stockton, by Midshipman Beale (who valorously made his way to San Diego), suggesting that a reinforcement be sent out to meet the party, whose advance the watchful enemy, now in greater number, were ready to dispute at all the passes. Four days the Americans remained in camp. For food they were reduced to mule-flesh, but they were able to get water by boring holes. Within twenty-four hours of being wounded General Kearny had resumed the command, and on the evening of the fourth day, when their spirits were heaviest, they were suddenly gladdened by the arrival of two hundred sailors and marines who, under Lieutenant Gray, of the Navy, had come to their relief. Confronted by this efficient force the enemy retired to the north and the Americans without molestation made their way to San Diego.

With the General and his dragoons in San Diego recovering from their wounds and fatigue before being called upon to under-

take the next step in the subjugation of California, we may digress a moment to read an interesting account, from General Kearny's own pen, of the experiences just passed through, of the condition of affairs on the coast as he found them a week after his arrival, and an outline of what he intended to do. The document, a letter to his wife, has recently become available through the generosity of Henry S. Kearny, Esq., a son of the General, and by courtesy of the Missouri Historical Society, its custodian, it was for the first time made public through a reading before the Historical Society of Southern California, February 6, 1911, by Valentine Mott Porter, Vice-President of the Missouri Historical Society.

"San Diego, Upper California, December 19, 1846.

"My dear Mary:

"I have been here one week—have been anxious to write to you, but no means of sending. In two days Major Swords will leave for the Sandwich Islands to get provisions, & I must write by him, hoping that he may find there some vessel about starting for the U. States.

"I know my dear wife that you may be uneasy about me, separated as we are so far from each other. Let me therefore in the first place tell you that I am moving about as if nothing had happened to me, that my appetite is perfectly good, & that I feel but very little inconvenience from my wounds. They are healing up much faster than I could have expected, & in one week more I think I shall be perfectly and entirely recovered. As a good Christian you will unite with me in thanks to our God, who directs all things, that He has preserved me thro' the perils & dangers that surrounded me.

"I have written a report to the Adjutant General of our action of the 6th December that may probably be published in the



papers, when you will see it. In the mean time I have to tell you that on the 6th at daybreak, with about 80 men, we attacked a party of 160 Mexicans, which we defeated after an hour's fighting, & drove them from the field. We gained a victory over the enemy, but paid most dearly for it. Capts. Moore & Johnson, & Lieut. Hammond, with 2 Sergts, 2 Corpls & 10 Privs. of Dragoons were killed—about 16 of us were wounded, myself in two places in the left side by lances, one of which bled very freely, which was of advantage to me. The loss of our killed is deeply felt by all, particularly by myself, who very much miss my aid Johnston, who was a most excellent & talented soldier, & Capt. Moore, who displayed great courage & chivalry in the fight, as did Lieut. Hammond. Capt. Turner is now with me—he is perfectly well—was not wounded, but had his jacket, tho' not his skin, torn. Lieut. Warner of the Topo. Engs. received three wounds, but is now nearly well. Mr. Robideaux, my interpreter, is wounded but is recovering. Poor Johnston's loss will be felt by many & perhaps not least by Miss Cotheal, a sister of Mrs. Maj. Swords, to whom he was engaged. I have now, my dear wife, given you some items so that your own mind may be easy. Do not think that I am worse than I represent myself, for it is not so. I expect in less than a week to be on my horse & as active as I ever was.

“Your brother William I learn is quite well—he is on the *Warren* & in the Bay of San Francisco, about a week's sail from here. I hope to see him ere long. He will not be able to get back to the U. S. before next summer. Commodore Stockton is at this place with 3 of his ships & has 4 or 500 of his Sailors & Marines here in town to garrison it. Among them are many very clever fellows, & some messmates of William's, who lately left the Warren & from whom I have heard of him.

“We had a very long & tiresome march of it from Santa Fé.

We came down the Del Norte 230 miles—then to the River Gila (pronounced Hela). . . . We marched 500 miles down that River, having most of the way a bridle path, but over a very rough and barren country. It surprised me to see so much land that can never be of any use to man or beast. We traveled many days without seeing a spear of grass, and no vegetation excepting a species of *Fremontia*, & the *mesquite* tree, something like our thorn, & which our mules ate, thorns and branches, to keep them alive. After crossing the Colorado & getting about 100 miles this side of it, the country improved, & about here is well enough, tho' having but very little timber & but few running streams—the climate is very dry & tho' this is the rainy season of the year, yet we have more clouds to threaten us, than rain to fall upon us—there is no certainty of a crop in this part of the world, unless the land is irrigated from running streams.

“Lieut. Col. Fremont is still in California, & we are daily expecting to hear from him. He went up the Coast to raise Volunteers, from the Emigrants from Missouri, to attack the Californians, 700 of whom are now said to be in arms about 100 miles from here. Fremont, it is supposed, is not far from there—if he has not force enough, it is expected that he will send word to us. I have not heard of Capt. Cooke & the Mormons, tho' hope to see them here in less than a month. I am also ignorant where the Volunteers and the Artillery from New York are, or when to expect them. The great difficulty of getting information here renders it necessary that all our plans should be well considered before attempting to put them into execution. When I get the Volunteers into the country, I can drive the enemy out of it with ease, tho' at present they have the advantage of us, as they are admirably mounted and the very best riders in the world—hardly one that is not fit for the Circus. This is a great Country for cattle & horses, very many of both run wild & are never caught

except when wanted for beef or to be broken—a fine mare is worth about \$2—an unbroken horse \$5—a broken one \$10—so you see that horse flesh is cheap.

“If you have any curiosity to know where San Diego is, you will find it on the maps in lat.  $33^{\circ}$  on the Pacific & not far from the lower end of Upper California. We have the ocean in sight, & hear the rolling waves which sound like rumbling thunder. We have abundance of fine fish, furnished us by the Navy, who each day catch enough in their nets to supply all. In 6 days we shall have Christmas & a week from that a New Year. May we all live my dear Mary to be reunited before the year is past. You must take good care of yourself & all our little ones, so that when I return our numbers will be complete. I have not heard from you since your letter to me of the 19th August (4 months since). . . . What great changes have taken place in the Regt. (1st U. S. Dragoons), within the last 6 months. Phil has been for years sighing for a Captaincy.” (“Phil,” a nephew, was the celebrated Phil Kearny, who became a Major-General in the Civil War, and was killed at Chantilly, Va., in 1862.) “He is now entitled to Compy B, which was poor Johnston’s. . . . Take care of yourself and the young ones. Regards to John & Sophie. I hope they like their farm near Saint Louis. I wonder how you get on in the management of business, etc., etc.

“Love again to you & the children. Yours ever most truly,  
“S. W. K.”

General Kearny had come to California with orders from the President to take possession of the territory and as a sequel thereto to organize a civil government. On his arrival he found the country, with the exception of the few seaports, still in possession of the inhabitants. Under his instructions it became his duty

to establish the supremacy of the United States. Prior to his arrival Commodore Stockton, who had been acting as Commander-in-Chief and Governor, being the senior American officer on the coast, had taken a superficial possession of California, but not only had he lost the greater part of it, but the task of reconquering the people was now made harder than if he had done nothing. General Kearny exhibited to the Commodore his instructions, with the expectation, no doubt, of succeeding him in the chief command. The Commodore had no instructions other than those that had come to his predecessor, Commodore Sloat, and these did not go as far as to authorize a land movement by the naval forces. Nevertheless, Commodore Stockton declined to turn over the chief command of the land forces or the position of governor. General Kearny, thus prevented from carrying out his orders, for he had but a handful of his own troops to back up his authority, against several hundred naval men at the command of Stockton, was in a very awkward situation. Until the arrival of other land forces who would report to him, he was powerless. Making the best of the matter, therefore, he deferred asserting his rights, and, as gracefully as he could, tried to avoid friction. Although the Commodore was unwilling to resign the chief control of affairs he did offer to give the General subordinate command of the troops. This was declined for cogent reasons. Any land movement that might have to be undertaken the General would naturally want to direct, but before such a movement became necessary the additional troops might arrive and enable him to carry out his instructions. As we learn from his letter it was the supposition at San Diego that the first blow at the enemy, then gathered about Los Angeles, would soon be struck by Fremont's battalion, which had been coming down the coast, and news of an engagement was momentarily expected. The letter indicates that as late as December 19th there was no impending movement



from San Diego, and that unless Fremont should call for support no advance was contemplated for the present. Three days later, however, we learn from letters that passed between them, that Stockton discussed with Kearny the propriety of taking a force from San Diego as far at least as San Luis Rey, on the route to Los Angeles, in order to be able more conveniently to co-operate with Fremont, if called upon, or to cut off a possible retreat of the enemy should Fremont defeat but not pursue him. If, on the other hand, the support were not needed, the troops could return to San Diego without having to make a long march. The General, in an opinion he wrote after the interview, advised a march not merely to San Luis Rey, but all the way to Los Angeles (inferentially without waiting to hear from Fremont), for the purpose of joining with him at once or creating a diversion in his favor. He said, in his letter to Stockton: "If you can take from here a sufficient force" for the purpose named, "I advise that you do so. . . . I do not think that Lt. Col Fremont should be left unsupported to fight a battle upon which the fate of California may for a long time depend." This advice the Commodore resented as being gratuitous and merely reflective of the course he had himself proposed, and also (without seeing the inconsistency), because it would leave the base at San Diego unprotected. The General, in a polite reply, disclaiming any intention to advise a movement that would jeopardize the safety of the garrison or the ships in the harbor, said further: "My letter of yesterday's date stated that, '*If you can take from here,*' etc., etc., of which you were the judge, & of which I knew nothing." This preliminary skirmish in a controversy that later became bitter is cited merely to show that Stockton's letter to Kearny does not substantiate his subsequent claim to have been the first to suggest an unconditional movement all the way to Los Angeles to join Fremont. His plan, as we have seen, was

to march only as far as San Luis Rey, a continuation to Los Angeles being contingent upon a call from Fremont. Kearny's plan was the one actually followed. They did not wait to hear from Fremont, and he never sent any word. As a matter of fact, they got to Los Angeles before he did, and fought the expected battle.

A decision to advance having been arrived at by the Commodore, preparations began forthwith. Practically all the available troops consisting of about sixty unmounted dragoons under Captain Turner, fifty California volunteers, and over four hundred sailors and marines, with six pieces of artillery, were chosen to go. General Kearny reconsidered his declination to take charge of the troops, realizing probably that in the face of what might prove to be a serious campaign, requiring the exercise of military skill, it was his duty as an experienced army man to give his services and to put aside temporarily the question of rank. The Commodore acquiesced, but announced to the officers that while the General would be in command of the troops, he himself would go along as "commander-in-chief." The General let him feel that way about it, but he evidently expected from the Commodore little if any interference with his own conduct of the movement. His orders from Washington directed him to co-operate with the naval forces, and he would do all he could to avoid friction. Lieutenant Emory, who acted as the assistant adjutant-general in this campaign, subsequently wrote: "No order of any moment was given, either in the fight of the 8th or the 9th, which was not given by General Kearny in person, or through the undersigned, as his acting assistant adjutant-general. General Kearny commanded in both battles."

The troops marched out of San Diego on December 29th. Progress was slow, due to the poor condition of the animals and the difficulty in getting the clumsy *carretas*, loaded with ammuni-

tion and provisions, through the deep sand and over the rough hills. On January 8th, at the crossing of the San Gabriel River, the enemy was waiting to receive them. General Florés, self-styled governor, since the abdication of Pico, was in command. He had posted five hundred men on a bluff some six or eight hundred yards back from the river and two of his cannon opposite the ford. On the flanks were squadrons of cavalry under Andrés Pico, Manuel Garfias, and José Antonio Carillo. The Americans moved across in the form of a square, the front covered by a strong party of skirmishers, the rear by a company of carbineers, the flanks with the remainder of the command. The cattle and wagon train were placed in the center of this formation, which was dubbed by the sailors a "Yankee Corral." The artillery was at the four angles. This order of march was adopted as the best means of repelling the enemy's cavalry and became the habitual formation when in the presence of the enemy. The Americans had no cavalry, the dragoons being unmounted, and one of the enemy's tricks was to try to run off the cattle by sudden charges. As the square moved across the ford, the enemy opened fire. The Americans continued to advance, wading through the shallow water, and pulling along the guns. When they had gained the opposite bank they opened up with their artillery, providing a cover under which the wagons and cattle were taken across, although with some difficulty because of quicksands. Charges by the enemy on the rear and the left flank were successfully met. Meanwhile a lively cannonading was in progress on both sides, but the enemy's powder, made at San Gabriel, was nothing to boast of. In an hour and a half all had crossed, the opposing artillery was silenced, and the bluff captured. The enemy retreated in the direction of Los Angeles, but the Americans having no means of pursuit went into camp.

The next day (9th) the advance was resumed, the column mov-

ing across the open plain or *mesa* between the San Gabriel and Los Angeles rivers. At the end of five or six miles the enemy's line was discovered to the right in a favorable position. The Americans deflected to the left, and when abreast of the enemy were fired upon by artillery at long range. An artillery duel ensued, continuing for several hours as the Army advanced in its habitual square. One or two cavalry charges were repulsed with some slight loss on both sides. Finally the Californians withdrew, carrying off their dead and wounded. A renewal of the attack was expected, but the next morning (10th) a flag of truce was brought in by residents of Los Angeles, who said no resistance would be offered to the entry of the Americans into the city. In return the citizens were guaranteed full protection. The army accordingly marched in, but not without observing due precaution against treachery, for Governor Florés had already broken faith in breaking his parole given at the time of the first occupation. Barring a few minor disturbances, the reoccupation of the town was accompanied with no disorder.

The American flag was once again raised at Los Angeles, this time not to be lowered. Florés, who probably expected no mercy from Stockton or Kearny, each of whom had threatened to have him shot if captured because of his broken parole, had abdicated the command of his shattered forces to Andrés Pico and betaken himself to Mexico. For similar reasons Pico found it inconvenient to capitulate to the Commodore or the General, and resolved to see what he could do with Fremont, who, he discovered, was then approaching Los Angeles via Cahuenga Pass. Without for a moment questioning his own authority Fremont jumped at the offer and granted decidedly favorable terms, thereby increasing his popularity with the people of the country. Both Stockton and Kearney were somewhat vexed at his assumption of authority, but they decided to ratify his act rather than stir



up trouble. So ended all hostilities between the Californians and the Americans, and none remained excepting between the leaders on the victorious side. This phase will require but brief discussion, as the issues involved were adjudicated officially and are matters of public record.

As we have seen, the first "conquest" so-called, was specious and superficial. As it turned out, the first real fighting took place after Kearny's arrival, and the final, actual conquest was made practically under his leadership.

As, however, Stockton and Fremont continued to ignore his authority and instructions, and as Kearny lacked troops with which to enforce his orders, he merely protested against the organization of a civil government by Stockton, and warned him in these words: "As I am prepared to carry out the President's instructions to me, which you oppose, I must for the purpose of preventing collision between us and possibly a civil war in consequence of it, remain silent for the present, leaving with you the great responsibility of doing that for which you have no authority, and preventing me from complying with the President's orders."<sup>1</sup>

General Kearny, with his dragoons, thereupon left Los Angeles and returned to San Diego. There the Battalion of Mormon Infantry, over three hundred strong, under Lieut. Col. P. St. G. Cooke, reported to him a few days later, on January 29th. Leaving these troops in the south the General embarked for Monterey, where he found Captain Tompkins and his company of regular artillery, with a large supply of guns, ammunition, entrenching tools, etc., waiting to report to him.

(With this company of artillery were Lieuts. W. T. Sherman, O. C. Ord, and H. W. Halleck, all of whom became famous generals in the Civil War.)

<sup>1</sup> "Fremont's Court-martial," pp. 79-80.

What was even more gratifying to him, Commodore Shubrick had arrived, with orders to succeed Stockton in command of the Pacific Squadron, and he unhesitatingly recognized Kearny's authority. The General was now in a position successfully to assert his authority and he set about to organize a civil government, fixing upon Monterey as the capital. On March 1st he assumed the governorship and entered upon his duties.

Meanwhile, at Los Angeles, Commodore Stockton had issued (January 16th) a commission to Fremont as governor. For the ensuing month or so Fremont claimed to be exercising the duties of the office, but as his sphere of influence did not extend much beyond the limits of the town of Los Angeles in that early day, they were not very onerous. From General Kearny he received an order to report to him at once at Monterey, bringing along those of his volunteers who declined to remain in the service and who wished their discharge, and also to deliver all public documents in his control pertaining to the government of California. After taking his time about it and making various excuses, meanwhile having received later orders to the same effect, he reluctantly came to Monterey, but instead of rendering obedience at once to the General, tried to parley with him, his manner being far from respectful. The General asked him pointblank if he intended to obey orders, telling him to take an hour, or a day, to think it over. Fremont retired for meditation. Realizing, very likely, that his absurd pretensions would not be supported at Washington, he returned in about an hour and gave an affirmative answer.

An extract from a report to the Hon. George Bancroft, Secretary of the Navy, by Commodore W. Branford Shubrick, dated "Monterey, February 15, 1847," reads: "I have recognized in General Kearny the senior officer of the Army in California; have consulted and shall co-operate with him as such; and I feel

that I am particularly fortunate in having so gallant a soldier and so intelligent a gentleman to aid me in such parts of my duty as do not appertain strictly to my profession. . . .”

“On the eleventh instant, General Kearny left here (Monterey) in the sloop-of-war *Cyane* for San Francisco to examine that, as he had done this harbor, with a view to the location of permanent fortifications. I directed Commander Du Pont to relieve Commander Hull at Yerba Buena, and Captain Mervine to bring the *Warren* with him to this place.”

Amongst the mail that General Kearny carried with him to San Francisco was the following letter written by the Captain of the U. S. S. *Portsmouth*:

“San Diego, January 30, 1847.

“My dear Sir,

“Confiding in the protecting care of an ever kind Providence, I have been led steadily to cherish the hope, that your missing launch has been captured, or fallen by some means into the hands of the enemy—and that my sons and others that were in her are still safe.

“Should this my dear Sir, prove to be the case, it is probable that my Sons will have arrived at Yerba Buena before the departure of the *Cyane* from that port—in which case, you will add much to my present indebtedness by causing my Son Elliott to take passage in her with the view of joining me on the coast of Mexico, where I am going almost immediately.

“Otherwise, should it be ascertained or there exist sufficient reason for apprehending that all are lost, which God forbid! you will confer a favor by writing me (by the *Cyane*) all particulars which you may have gathered in relation to the unhappy disaster.

“With an expression of my sincere congratulations on the

pleasure you will derive from a meeting with your Brother-in-law General Kearny, who has kindly promised to hand you this, I subscribe myself

“ Dear Sir, Your Obdt. Servt.,

“ Jno. B. Montgomery, U. S. N.

“ To Lieut. Radford, U. S. S. *Warren*.

“ N. B. Capt. Du Pont will take charge of letters—or anything you may have to forward me. J. B. M.”

An entry in the *Warren's* log of December 21, 1846, reads:

“ Yerba Buena—All the boats that were sent in search of our Launch having returned without having received the least intelligence in regard to her fate, it is therefore to be conjectured that she is lost, together with the following officers and men viz. Act. Master Wm. H. Montgomery, of this ship. Midn. D. E. Hugunin & Capt. Clerk John E. Montgomery of the *Portsmouth*. Ten men. Arms & ammunition lost.”

Capt. John B. Montgomery whose two sons, one Acting Master on U. S. S. *Warren*, and the other a captain's clerk, were drowned in the tragic and mysterious loss of the *Warren's* launch in November, 1846, was the officer who, on July 9th, had, in obedience to orders from Commodore Sloat, hauled down the Mexican flag and run up the Stars and Stripes on the Plaza of Yerba Buena, under a salute of twenty-one guns from the U. S. Sloop-of-war *Portsmouth*. The Plaza was rechristened “ Portsmouth Square,” and the street bordering the harbor was named for Montgomery.

On February 17, 1847, General Kearny visited the *Warren* at Yerba Buena and was received on board with a salute of thirteen guns.

Either during this visit or shortly afterwards the question of



Lieutenant Radford's return to the United States with his brother-in-law's command must have been broached, with the result shown in the following application:

" U. S. Ship *Warren*, Monterey, California,  
" May 3, 1847,

" Sir,

" Learning from Gen'l Kearny that he contemplates returning to the United States some time in June next, I respectfully request Commodore Biddle's permission to accompany him.

" I would not make the above application were the ship to which I am attached in the condition of an efficient and active cruiser;

" I have the honor to be, with respect,

" Your Ob't Serv't,

" Wm. Radford,

" Lt. U. S. Navy.

" Commodore James Biddle,

" Comdg. Pacific Squadron."

Commodore Shubrick had been succeeded in command by Commodore Biddle, whose reply to the above application was as follows:

" U. S. Ship *Columbus*,

" Monterey, May, 20, 1847.

" Sir,

" I have received your letter applying for leave to return home by land in company with General Kearny. As you have been nearly four years abroad on duty, you have my permission, *at your own expense* to accompany General Kearny across the mountains. On arriving at your home within the United States, report

*by letter* to the Secretary of the Navy, forwarding a copy of this letter.

“Very Respectfully,  
 “Your Most Obedient  
 “James Biddle,  
 Comg. Pacific Squadron.

“Lieut. Wm. Radford,  
 “U. S. Ship *Warren*,  
 “J. B. Hull, Commander.”

From log of U. S. S. *Warren*, December 2, 1844, at Monterey.  
 Joseph B. Hull, Commander,

Lieutenants,

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| William Radford | Wm. B. Renshaw |
| Wm. L. Murray   | John Rutledge  |

Surgeon

Wm. J. Powell

Purser

Thomas R. Ware

Acting Master

Wm. H. Montgomery

Asst. Surgeon

Edmund Hudson

Midshipmen

|                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Fred Kellogg       | R. D. Minor      |
| Thos. J. McRoberts | And. W. Johnson  |
| Walter O. Crain    | Alex. M. de Brie |

Stanwix Gansewort

Forward Officers

|             |           |
|-------------|-----------|
| John Walker | Boatswain |
|-------------|-----------|

## CHAPTER XII

### CROSSING THE PLAINS

GENERAL KEARNY, who had come to California with orders from President Polk to "take possession of the territory and as a sequel thereto to organize a civil government," had, on March 1, 1847, assumed the governorship, and entered upon his duties. Having secured permission before leaving the East to return as soon as peace and quiet should reign in California, he, after seeing the civil government organized and in good working order, turned over the governorship to Col. Richard B. Mason, who had succeeded him in command of the First U. S. Dragoons, and prepared to depart.

On the 31st of May General Kearny left Monterey on his return journey to the United States, in company with Lieutenant-Colonel Cooke, of the First Dragoons, Major Thomas Swords, and Captain Turner, "all officers who had largely and honorably participated in the conquest of California and New Mexico; and with Lieutenant Radford of the U. S. Navy, who had distinguished himself both at Mazatlan and in California."<sup>1</sup>

Other members of the party were Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont, the Hon. Willard P. Hall, Assistant Surgeon Sanderson, and thirteen of the Mormon battalion which, with nineteen of Fremont's topographical party, made an aggregate of forty men.

They came by way of the Southern Pass, and the hazards and difficulties of their journey contrast strangely indeed with the

<sup>1</sup> J. M. Cutts: "Conquest of California."

luxurious traveling of the present day. From the journal of a gallant and highly intelligent officer of General Kearny's Staff, and from other records, we learn that there had been colder weather in March, 1847, than had been experienced in California for twenty years. Some hasty jottings in a little notebook of Lieutenant Radford's reads: "Left Monterey May 31, 1847, came to Salinas River—15 miles.

"June 1st, Valley of San Juan—28 miles.

"June 2nd, Pachecas, same valley.

"June 3rd, Tulare Valley," (now better known as San Joaquin) 20 miles.

"June 4th, River San Joaquin.

"June 5th, Crossed the River.

"June 6th, All the party over.

"June 7th, Came to the River Tuolumne, 20 miles.

"June 8th, Continued our march to Sutter's, on the Sacramento, which place we reached after swimming three more streams, all of which rivers were very high from the melting of the snow in the California mountains;

"June 13th, reached Sutter's, and remained there until the 16th, refitting, etc."

While the party found themselves forced to swim four or five mountain torrents swollen by the melting snow to the breadth of rivers, the baggage and provisions were carried across in skin boats made upon the spot. Under such conditions their progress was naturally slow, as well as laborious and most hazardous. By an upset of one of these primitive boats Colonel Cooke lost his entire outfit, even to papers and specie. His saddle and blankets were the only things saved.

Pending the time the expedition is refitting at Sutter's a word in regard to the place, called by its owner "New Helvetia," may not be amiss.



"During the Gubernatorial term of Juan Bautista Alvarado," writes Mrs. Atherton, "there was a great influx of foreigners in Old California, and the most notable amongst these was John Augustus Sutter, born in the Grand Duchy of Baden (1803), a seeker of fortune in the Sandwich Islands (H. I.) until 1839, when he made up his mind to try his luck in California." Arriving in the Bay of San Francisco in June, 1839, he was not permitted to land because of having no license, and therefore proceeded down the coast to Monterey. There he informed Alvarado that he wished to settle in California and found a colony.

Alvarado, recognizing in Sutter a man of uncommon ability and serious purpose, gave him the license to enter and to settle on a fork of the Sacramento and American rivers, naturalization papers in the following year, a large grant of land, and appointed him a representative of the government in the Sacramento River Frontier.

This part of the country was infested with men of the lowest type, and Sutter was expected to hold these desperadoes well in check. During the first year he built a fort and a house and outbuildings surrounded by a stockade, in that wild valley facing the Sierra, and there in that splendid domain, which he called New Helvetia, Sutter ruled like a feudal lord. He soon had a colony of three hundred Indians, whom he taught not only agriculture but the mechanical trades, and who became much attached to him. He established a primary school, built the natives comfortable huts, and altogether seems to have treated them with paternal kindness as long as they obeyed him blindly. In fact, he reigned like a prince at New Helvetia, where his domain covered thirty-three square miles, with, just beyond, another vast grant of ninety-three thousand acres. He had thousands of head of cattle, horses, sheep, and hundreds of Indians who were his veritable subjects.

For several years Sutter had watched the emigrant trains roll down the slopes of the Sierras; and had dispensed hospitality to these weary adventurers. Many a relief party had he sent up into the high Sierras when emigrants had been overtaken by disaster.<sup>1</sup> Upon the revolting traces of one such an emigrant party General Kearny's returning expedition was to fall.

After three days spent in refitting at Sutter's, we find among the jottings in Lieutenant Radford's notebook the following:

"Left the west side of the American (river) on the 16th of June, and after two short days' travel reached Johnson's in Bear River Valley, the last settlement.

"June 18th, Took up our march east, up the Bear River, traveled 25 miles. June 19th, traveled 23 miles. 20th, 20 miles, and camped in a beautiful little valley, some snow——"

Other accounts tell us that the last rancho was passed on the 18th of June. On the 21st they struck the Juba River which was overflowing, hence they passed higher up and crossed the Sierra Nevada, riding thirty-five miles over snow that was from five to twenty-five feet deep, under which water was running in many places in great torrents, and through which the mules were constantly breaking and burying themselves.

Lieutenant Radford's notes of this date read: "On the 21st commenced our march again up the mountain Sierra Nevada, which was covered with snow in some places twenty feet deep, and from the frequency of the horses breaking through found our march very fatiguing," (this description would indicate that there were horses as well as mules amongst the mounts) "Reached Truckee Lake which is on the east side of the mountains" (better known today as Donner Lake—it is literally upon the crest of the range) "and the head of the Truckee River."

<sup>1</sup> Paraphrased from Mrs. Atherton's account.

The winter had changed suddenly to spring, and the snow beneath their feet and overhanging from the mountain cliffs threatened to engulf or overwhelm them alternately or simultaneously. Struggling forward they passed the remains, or, more strictly speaking, the clothes of one Shattan, an emigrant, who, becoming stone blind, had been abandoned by his companions and had here starved to death. All the members of the party experienced great pain from the reflection of the snow and were obliged to protect their eyes with their handkerchiefs.

The following entry is terse and gruesome: "June 22nd, Passed along the north side of the lake, coming to the cabins where the emigrants attempted to winter. After gathering together all the bones we could find and burying them we proceeded down the Truckee River."

Five miles beyond the beautiful Truckee Lake, surrounded by snow-capped mountains, they came on the 22nd to "Cannibal Camp," so called from the deplorable state to which a party of emigrants had been reduced in the winter of 1846. These emigrants who had perished so miserably composed what was known as the "Donner party," from their having chosen one George Donner as their leader.

"This was a party of eighty-five people," writes Gertrude Atherton,—“men, women, and children—that had started early enough to cross the Sierras before the snow fell, but lost time on a false trail and began the eastern ascent on the last day of October, with exhausted provisions. They encountered one blizzard after another. The snow buried their wagons and cattle; they built cabins of boughs covered with hides, fearing, in spite of those who pushed on ahead in search of relief, that they must spend the winter in these terrible fastnesses. Relief parties from Sutter's Fort were little more fortunate. They fell coming in, or going out with the few that were able to brave the storms and

travel. The winter wore on, the blizzards increased in fury and duration. Men, women, and children died exhausted or starved. Donner, like a good captain, had refused to leave his foundering ship until those under his command had been saved. When the second relief party left Donner Lake they took all that were camped at this point except Donner, who was now too weak to travel, Mrs. Donner, who refused to leave her husband, and a man named Keysburg, who was ordered to remain and look after them. When the snows had melted somewhat a third relief party reached the lake to find Donner laid out in a winding sheet, Keysburg looking like a gorilla and acting like a maniac, and no Mrs. Donner. They found her later in the camp kettle and a bucket, salted down. When Keysburg, assisted by a rope round his neck, recovered his mind, he confessed to having murdered and eaten portions, not only of this brave woman, who had perhaps consciously dared worse than the Sierra storms to console her dying husband, but of others, before the second relief party had come.

"Such law as there was in the country seemed to break down before this monster. A year or two later the Americans would have lynched him; but Sutter, knowing the effect of the terrible stillnesses under falling snow, the monotonies of a long Sierra winter, and the hunger and privation that poison the brain with vitiated blood, let him go. He lived miserably in the mountains for the rest of his life, shunned as a pariah."

This criminal had, of course, gone at the time of General Kearny's arrival, but his party found a skull that had been sawn in two in order to reach its contents, five perfect skeletons and other remains. In fact, from the time of entering the mountains General Kearny's party had been constantly passing the remains of some poor emigrant, whose bones they had humanely gathered up and buried, as they did those of the unfortunates



of "Cannibal Camp." This merciful duty completed, the party once more took up their journey.

Referring once more to Lieutenant Radford's notebook we read:

" June 23rd, Crossed the river.

" 24th, (made) 25 miles down the Truckee.

" 25th, " 20 miles.

" 26th, " 28 miles.

" 27th, " 42 miles across a desert from Truckee River to the sink of Mary's River, (today the Humboldt) passed half way a boiling spring.

" June 28th, (made) 25 miles."

Here these brief notes end, and it is very possible that, knowing other members of the party to be keeping regular records of the journey, Radford decided to discontinue his writing, for which at the best of times, he had no especial fondness, being always a man of action rather than words.

Following the course of the Truckee River (named for an Indian guide known as "Truckee" because of his resemblance to a Frenchman so called) down the eastern slope, the party passed trackless mountains of black rock through which ran the narrow pass. Now and again the road crossed the stream, "some of whose branches presented, beside a swimming-deep torrent, hundreds of yards of dangerous bog and mire."

While encamped beside this river they were visited by the Digger Indians. The party were nearly out of provisions of all sorts when they met the first emigrants at the falls of Snake River, twenty-five miles beyond Fort Hall. Reaching Bear River they there obtained a recruit of horses and mules from the Snake Indians.

The party came the new road, about fifty miles, without water, from Green River to Big Sandy, meeting 940 wagons of emigrants, all or nearly all bound to Oregon. The last ones were encoun-

tered between the North Fork of Platte and Sweet Water, on July 28th. They were believed to be, and considered themselves, too late to reach Oregon and spoke of passing the winter at Fort Bridger. They had left St. Joseph about the 6th of June.

At Fort Laramie the party found many lodges of friendly Sioux. Leaving that fort on August 3rd they met the next day 685 wagons of Mormons who were advancing slowly in parties of fifty; they had come all the way by the north bank of the Platte, and expected to winter on the Great Salt Lake, which they asserted was to be "the final resting-place of their people."

Incredibly large herds of buffalo were passed through for several days near the junction of the two Plattes, but no Indians were encountered after that time.

Throughout the journey Lieutenant Radford, who was the possessor of the only shotgun in the party, was the hunter who replenished the larder when game was to be had.

General Kearny's party was only sixty-six days journeying from the "settlement of California," to Fort Leavenworth, having made not one day's stop. They averaged, for the last fifty-seven days, thirty-one miles; the total distance covered was nearly 2,200 miles.

From Fort Leavenworth Lieutenant Radford returned to St. Louis, from which city he reported himself, on August 28th, 1847, as directed by Commodore Biddle, to the Navy Department.

That he again visited Mexico, though this time on the western coast, is evidenced by the following official paper:

"Navy Department, March 2nd, 1848.

"Sir,

"In conformity to your request, and with the view of your joining the Army in Mexico, you have permission to be absent

from the United States. You will report to the Department once in every three months.

“ I am respectfully,

“ Your Obdt. Servt.

“ J. Y. Mason.”

“ Lieut. Wm. Radford,  
“ Washington, D. C.”

Upon reaching Fort Leavenworth General Kearny ordered Lieutenant Colonel Fremont to report to the Adjutant General at Washington. There he was court martialed for “conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline.” The following letter from General Kearny, addressed to “Lieut. Wm. Radford, U. S. Navy, New York,” relates to this.

“ Washington, Sunday, November 28th, 1847.

“ Dear William,

“ I was much distressed to learn by letter from Mary (Mrs. Kearny), that you were taken sick at Baltimore, and continued so the next day on your road to New York. I hope you have perfectly recovered ere this.

“ I think there is some prospect of the Court-Martial closing the examination of all the witnesses by the end of this week. In that case the Court will most probably adjourn in 3 or 4 days after. I shall remain here until after the adjournment to see that Col. Benton shall not exercise any undue influence to set aside the verdict of the Court, if unfavorable to his son-in-law.

“ The difficulty between Com. S. (Stockton) and myself has been adjusted. I wrote to him, asking if he alluded to me in his letter of Nov. 3rd, to the Editors of the Republican. He replied, that he did not. We have since then twice met in the street, and we salute each other. He says the affair between us is amicably and honorably adjusted to both parties. Col. Benton will be very

much disappointed in the testimony of Com. S., as I think, when he hears it. I have been led to believe that it will be much more against the defense than in its favor.

"Write to me and let me know how you are, and what you are about. Love to Mary. I will write to her tomorrow. (Mrs. Kearny was evidently then in New York.) Please give my respects to Gen'l Gaines.

"Yours, S. W. Kearny."

"Several of your Navy friends inquire about you, Capt. Gedney yesterday among them."

That the Court did not adjourn as early as was anticipated by General Kearny, is shown by an order to Lieut. Wm. Radford, dated December 20th, 1847, to "report without delay to the President of the Court-Martial now in session at the U. S. Arsenal, Washington, for the trial of Lt. Col. Fremont of the Army for the purpose of giving your testimony.

"J. Y. Mason."

(Secretary of the Navy.)

"At the trial," writes Mr. Valentine Mott Porter, "Fremont was given great latitude in the introduction of testimony and he used the opportunity to recite with great dramatic effect his glorious services to the country in the conquest of California. Senator Benton, his father-in-law, was one of his counsel and was characteristically oratorical in his behalf. Fremont, nevertheless, was found guilty . . . and sentenced to be dismissed from the Army. Seven of the thirteen members of the court, in recognition of his past services as an explorer, recommended clemency. In the judgment of the court nothing had been shown to affect the honor or character of General Kearny. President Polk approved in all but one detail the sentence of the court, but in view of



the prisoner's former meritorious services and the recommendation, remitted the penalty of dismissal. He ordered him to resume his sword and report for duty. Fremont declined to receive clemency, because he could not admit the justice of the decision, and, thoroughly embittered, he resigned from the Army." His subsequent career has already been given.

"General Kearny, having no political aspirations, reported for duty, joined the Army in Mexico, served as military governor of Vera Cruz and later of the City of Mexico, in which city he fell ill and, returning to his home in St. Louis, died there on October 31st, 1848, the year following his return from California.

## CHAPTER XIII

### MORRISTOWN

AN event of great importance in Naval History had taken place during Lieutenant Radford's term of service on the Pacific Station—the founding of the U. S. Naval Academy.

The use of steam for men-of-war had then passed the experimental stage, and as it was evident that steam engineering could not be picked up, like seamanship, simply by going to sea, the historian, George Bancroft, in accepting the post of Secretary of the Navy in March, 1845, did so with the determination of founding a Naval Academy. There were many obstacles to be overcome, and he went about it with consummate tact. Congress did not wish to spend any more money on the Navy, and the older officers laughed at the idea of "teaching sailors on shore." Bancroft managed so that the suggestion for a school appeared to come from the officers themselves. He first "asked an examining board, consisting of older officers, to make a report on the best location for the school, and by submitting the same question to another board, composed of the younger element, won their approval as well. The recommendation of the first board that Fort Severn, Annapolis, was a suitable place was formally seconded by the second board, and thus the entire navy was committed to the idea.

"Bancroft then overcame the unwillingness of Congress to make an appropriation; first, by getting a transfer of Fort Severn from the War to the Navy Department; and secondly, by putting all but a selected few of the navy "schoolmasters" on the

waiting list, using the money appropriated to their salaries for the necessary expenses of the new academy.

"By these means, he managed in a few months from the time he accepted his post, to have the Naval Academy in actual operation. From the point of view of its effect on the personnel of the Navy, the founding of this school may be regarded as the most important event between the War of 1812 and the Civil War."<sup>1</sup>

Another event of a widely different character took place while Radford was attending the Fremont court-martial in Washington. On January 24th, 1848, James W. Marshall found gold in California. Marshall was one of several men who were digging a race-way for a mill on the American branch of the Sacramento River, for Colonel Sutter. One afternoon, when the water had been turned off, Marshall was walking in the tail-race when he saw something glittering on the bed. Picking up some of the yellow bits he examined them doubtfully. There had been rumors of gold in the neighborhood, and with a suspicion of the truth he carried the little collection of gleaming peas to Sutter. "He too was doubtful," Mrs. Atherton writes "but he possessed an encyclopedia. The two men read the article on gold carefully, and then applied the sulphuric acid test; finally, with the further assistance of scales, they convinced themselves that Marshall's trove was pure gold."

On September 14th, 1847, the City of Mexico surrendered to General Scott, and the fall of the national capital was the end of the Mexican War. The Mexicans, however, kept up a desultory resistance until the following January, when a treaty of peace was signed at Guadalupe Hidalgo, on February 2nd, 1848, by the terms of which we acquired Texas (with the Rio Grande as

<sup>1</sup> "History of the United States Navy," by Clark, Stevens, Alden, Krafft.

its southern boundary), New Mexico, Arizona, and California. These provinces included Nevada, Utah, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. For this enormous territory, sufficient for an empire, Mexico was paid \$15,000,000, and American claims against her to the amount of \$3,250,000 were assumed by our government. An army of occupation was placed in the country until all the terms should have been complied with.

We left Lieutenant Radford in the last chapter about setting forth anew for Mexico—possibly to join General Kearny at Vera Cruz—but, whatever may have been his object in going there, he made but a short stay, as on July 3rd, 1848, he reports his return to the Secretary of the Navy, and requests a three months' leave. The report is dated "New York City." During this leave there occurred an important event in his life, the telling of which will necessitate our referring to the double wedding which took place at Fincastle, Va., on December 23rd, 1806.

Among Lieutenant Radford's many friends in New York during the summer of 1848 was his cousin, Wm. Preston Griffin, also a lieutenant in the United States Navy, whose mother was Mary, daughter of Colonel Hancock and wife of John Caswell Griffin. Lieutenant Griffin had married first Mary Lawrence, only child of Capt. James Lawrence of "Don't give up the ship" memory.

Capt. James Lawrence has been called, next to Decatur, the most romantic figure in the U. S. Navy. Like most of the naval heroes of the War of 1812 he had entered the Navy as a midshipman in 1798, at the outbreak of the war with France, and had received his early training under Captain Tingey on the *Ganges*. He had won distinction in the war with Tripoli, notably as Decatur's lieutenant in the burning of the *Philadelphia*, and had reached the height of his fame by his brilliant capture of the *Peacock*, on February 24th, 1813. Lawrence, then in command of the sloop *Hornet*, discovered, when off the mouth of the Demerara



River, British Guiana, on his weather quarter, a brig which showed a willingness to engage. It was the *Peacock*, of about the same size as the *Hornet*, but with only two-thirds as heavy a broadside; for her 32-pound carronades, because of her light scantling, had all been replaced by 24s.

As the ships neared each other, Lawrence kept close to the wind, and secured the weather-gage. At 5.25 the ships, passing on opposite tacks, exchanged broadsides at half pistol-shot range. Then Lawrence, seeing that the *Peacock* was about to wear, bore up, receiving her starboard broadside, and ran close to her starboard quarter where, by a heavy and well-directed fire, he cut the brig to pieces. By this fire the British commander, Capt. William Peake, was killed, and soon the *Peacock* was in a desperate condition; in less than fifteen minutes after the action had begun she surrendered, hoisting an ensign union down, as a signal of distress. The ship was sinking fast, already having six feet of water in her hold.

While it must be admitted that the advantage favored the Americans in number of crew and weight of gun metal, still this does not explain the astonishing difference in the effects of the fire of the two ships. As some writer has observed, "Had the guns of the *Peacock* been of the largest size they could not have changed the result, as the weight of shot that did not hit is of no great moment."

Mortally wounded on the *Chesapeake* in her losing fight with the British 38-gun frigate *Shannon* (Captain Broke), Lawrence lingered for four days in great agony, ever repeating in his delirium the words that have since become the motto of the Navy, "Don't give up the ship."

After the death of his first wife Lieutenant Griffin married Christine Kean of New York, a sister of Mrs. Hamilton Fish, whose husband was Secretary of State during President Grant's

administration. Christine Kean's mother, a widow, had taken for her second husband Mr. Baker, a prominent citizen of Morristown, N. J., and to the Bakers' home, on a visit to Lieutenant Griffin and his wife, came William Radford, some time during the summer of 1848, and while in Morristown he there met (to quote from an address delivered by Capt. J. W. Miller, on November 5th, 1906, at the first meeting of the "Admiral Radford Section of the Navy League of the United States,") "Mary, the beautiful daughter of Joseph Lovell," whom he married on November 21st of that year.

The wedding, which took place in St. Peter's Church, was a quiet one owing to the recent death of General Kearny, and none but the family and intimate friends were present. Let it not be supposed, however, that this statement would indicate any dearth of guests, since Mrs. Joseph Lovell was by birth a Wetmore, and her mother (widow of Capt. George Wetmore of the British Army) was born an Ogden; at that time those two families, with their many ramifications, formed no inconsiderable part of the township's population. One incident of the wedding, of which as children it always amused us to hear, was, that not until the termination of the ceremony did the bride remark that the groom—who had with some difficulty been persuaded to appear in uniform—had omitted to remove his overcoat.

All accounts agree in pronouncing them to have been a handsome couple, and, although Mary Lovell was but nineteen and William Radford thirty-nine at the time of their marriage, he was of so bright and fun-loving a disposition that beside his wife's somewhat stately reserve of manner he appeared often the younger of the two. Their wedding journey took them to Richmond, where they were greatly fêted by Lieutenant Radford's many relatives. That they did not go to Lynchburg to visit his uncle, William Radford II, is shown by the following letter:



MARY ELIZABETH LOVELL

From a Miniature Made in 1850





" Lynchburg, December 19th, 1848.

" Dear William,

" I received your letter some days ago from Richmond announcing your marriage, at which information I was pleased. I was not entirely taken by surprise as I saw a gentleman from the North a few days before who stated that he had seen the announcement in one of the northern papers. You tell me, the name of your better half is ' Mary ' ; a very pretty name, but you omitted to mention the other part of her name before marriage. This omission I hope you will supply in some future letter, as being now settled you will have an opportunity of writing occasionally to your old friends. I regret it was not in your power to extend your visit to Bedford. You could have amused yourself with your gun, and given us an opportunity of becoming acquainted with your good lady. . . .

" We all received with unfeigned sorrow the account of the lamented death of Gen'l Kearny. I do not know any person in whom I felt a stronger interest from the short acquaintance I had with him. I felt a strong disposition to write to your sister on the occasion, but did not wish to open afresh the wound that the melancholy event had inflicted upon her, and I could only convey the deep sympathy we all felt for her in her bereavement. . . .

" Your affectionate uncle and friend,

" William Radford."

If Lieutenant Radford had mentioned the name of the young girl to whom he was engaged in some what vague terms, the following letter to Mr. Lovell shows that his daughter had been scarcely more explicit.

" Rome, February 10th, 1849.

" My dear Sir,

" I received last November a letter from Mary which I have

been desirous of answering, but could not, as I felt quite doubtful about her address, and I have been waiting in the expectation of receiving a letter from Hester,<sup>1</sup> which Mary informed me was to be written in *a few days*. I have not heard however from Hester, and begin to despair of receiving anything from that quarter & now enclose to you my answer to Mary, to which I wish you would give the proper direction. Mary writes that she was to be married in November & to leave immediately for St. Louis, and I did expect that Hester, knowing the interest which I should feel in the subject, would have replied ere this to my letter & have informed me of that event, if it had taken place.

"I am now again in Rome, & have been here more than a month, after passing the summer near Naples, & about two months at Florence, and find my interest in the place still continues, while the attractions of Naples and Florence are comparatively soon exhausted. In fact after visiting the museum & the environs of the former place & the two galleries of the latter, there is little else to be seen and one readily comes back to the immensely superior attractions both in antiquities and art which are collected here. Florence has no antiquities beyond the middle ages, & Naples, except the highly interesting ones from Pompeii & Herculaneum, has not many more; while Rome is, as it always has been, the great storehouse of all the most exquisite works of art of all countries & all ages.

"It is difficult to say, however, how long it will be a desirable place of residence or even a safe one, since the Pope, most unadvisably as I think & without any necessity, left his own States without appointing anyone to act in his place; the Country has been without any legal government, and the Chamber of

<sup>1</sup> Hester Wetmore, daughter of Mrs. Lovell's brother, Charles Wetmore, and later wife of Henry Van Arsdale, M.D., of Newark, N. J.

Deputies, from the necessity of the case, were obliged to appoint a Council & to give them all the powers of the Executive. The Chamber was then dissolved by the Council, and a National Convention summoned. As it was required that each member of the Convention should have at least five hundred votes, it was anticipated by some friends of the old system that the Convention would never meet for want of a choice of a sufficient number. In this however they have been entirely mistaken, the votes given in every where being extraordinarily large, in fact much larger in proportion to the population than we can give in our Country in the most excited party times.—The Convention accordingly met on Monday last and at once proceeded to adopt by acclamation a vote depriving the Pope of all temporal power and establishing a Republican form of Government and the decree was yesterday promulgated with great form & Ceremony at the Capitol, and was received with great enthusiasm by a vast crowd of people. And yet, from the conversation which I hear, I do not believe that the people if left to themselves would have any preference for such a government or, in fact, know what it means, and the more judicious regard it as impracticable. . . . In the meantime there is undoubtedly a party who expect that everything will be arranged by the armed intervention of the powers, to which however it is said that the Pope utterly objects. He would in fact be willing to give up all temporal power, if he could consistently with his oath, and it would probably not be any injury to the Catholic Church if he should do so. What therefore will be the result it is impossible to say.—If the Austrians or Spaniards or any other power should invade the territory there will be sufficient confusion & trouble here to make it not a very desirable place of residence—if they do not I do not see but that the Pope may remain at Gaeta for the rest of his life.

“Pray remember me kindly to Mrs. Lovell and Mary and

Hester and Charles. Also Mr. Colles's family, and do write about Mary's marriage; she calls him merely 'Mr. Radford of the Navy'; I wish to know more than that.

"Faithfully yours,

"Thos. Wetmore."

(Thomas Wetmore, born August 31st, 1794, son of Judge William Wetmore of Boston, older brother of Capt. George Wetmore, and first cousin of Mrs. Lovell. He died unmarried, March 30th, 1860.)

In the year 1832, my grandfather, Mr. Joseph Lovell, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Mr. James Colles, purchased the old Doughty place on the Basking Ridge road, in Morristown, N. J., and in the division of the estate Mr. Lovell took the house, of which Mrs. J. K. Colles, in a book entitled "Historic Morristown," writes: "Gen'l John Doughty's interesting old house, with its curious interior and many a secret closet, stands as of old on Mt. Kemble Avenue (formerly the Basking Ridge road), at the head of Colles Ave." Then, quoting from Mr. W. L. King, Mrs. Colles, in speaking of General Doughty, says: "He was the most distinguished resident of Morristown—at whose house Washington was a frequent visitor, and no doubt often dined."

In this house Lieutenant and Mrs. Radford spent their first years of married life, he being stationed at the Naval Rendezvous in New York, whither he went daily.

Capt. J. W. Miller in the address already alluded to, says:

"It may seem a far cry from the hills of Morris to the restless sea; and yet an impress of the ocean—with all its accompaniment of duty well performed, of self-sacrifice to the country—has been left upon the citizenship of this inland Jersey town; an impress much needed in these days of neglect of the higher virtues which should permeate patriotic lives."



(Let us hope that the late war has given the negation to these words.)

Speaking of the old MacCulloch homestead,<sup>1</sup> Captain Miller said: "If a circle of less than one mile were described around the place where we are now sitting, it would embrace the homes, or the former residences, of over forty naval officers who have lived among us."

After mentioning in eulogistic terms the one in whose honor this section of the Navy League had just been formed, Captain Miller went on:

"In 1848 there was a young Lieutenant living in Morristown who then, as always, had a downright, straightforward way of expressing his views, no matter whom they hit. His frank letters regarding the efficiency, or lack thereof, of certain officers in the Navy, is refreshing. The service would 'go to the devil' unless certain old foggy captains were retired. There were long cruises and hardships ahead of him while he was preparing himself to share with Farragut as commander of the *Iroquois* in the glory which came to the Navy in the fight below New Orleans. He received his Commodore's star in 1866. Morristown should never forget that it was the home of John De Camp, and that he married here into one of its oldest families.

"The widow of Commodore Slidell MacKenzie moved to Morristown in 1849. Her husband was in many respects the most well-known officer of his time. In the days when mutiny and piracy were common he risked a well-earned reputation for what he considered the good of the service, and was vindicated by his peers, and by the country, for one of the most drastic acts ever essential to maintain discipline on a small vessel."

<sup>1</sup> Formerly the home of his grandparents, but which was then his own home.

The matter to which Captain Miller here refers was the mutiny on the *Somers*, which occurred in the autumn of 1842. This 10-gun brig had been ordered to the African Coast under command of Commander Alexander Slidell MacKenzie, with despatches for Commodore Perry's squadron. On her return trip to New York on November 26th, the purser's steward sent word to the Captain that Acting-Midshipman Philip Spencer had tried to induce him to join a conspiracy to seize the ship, murder all the officers, together with such of the crew as would not be wanted, and turn pirate.

At first Commander MacKenzie laughed at the story as a boy's joke, but (since the bearing of the crew had been insubordinate from the time they left Madeira), the other officers were inclined to regard the matter as serious. Accordingly, Spencer was put in irons and his effects were searched, with the result that a paper with Greek characters was discovered. It happened that there was one person on board besides Spencer who understood the Greek alphabet—Midshipman Rodgers. He interpreted the words as a list of the crew, marked "certain," or "doubtful," with a few observations as to the policy to be pursued with the rest of the crew.

From the time of Spencer's arrest the conduct of the crew became more and more sullen and insubordinate. . . . The men gathered in whispering groups, and Spencer was observed making signals to them from the quarter-deck where he sat in irons.

From the evidence of the purser's steward, a boatswain's mate named Cromwell and a seaman named Small also were arrested as ringleaders and put in irons. As it was evident from the temper of the crew that the situation was extremely grave, Commander MacKenzie convened all his officers in a court of inquiry, while he, with a midshipman, took charge of the vessel. After deliberating about a day and a half, the officers returned a

report that the prisoners were guilty of a "determined intention to commit a mutiny on board this vessel of a most atrocious nature," and in view of the "uncertainty as to what extent they are leagued with others still at large, the impossibility of guarding against the contingencies which a day or an hour may bring forth, we are convinced that it would be impossible to carry them to the United States, and that the safety of the public property, the lives of ourselves, and of those committed to our charge, require that . . . they should be put to death."<sup>1</sup>

Commander MacKenzie concurred in this opinion, and on December 1st he caused the three conspirators to be hanged from the yard-arm. The execution had a salutary effect on the crew, who immediately returned to their duties with an alacrity that was in striking contrast to their previous conduct.

On the arrival of the *Somers* at New York, the report of this execution aroused the greatest excitement, particularly as Spencer was the son of the Secretary of War. But a commander's first duty is to save his ship and the lives of the officers and men under him, and Commander MacKenzie was honorably acquitted, despite the efforts of Spencer's father to have him indicted in the civil courts for murder. In fact, Spencer's dying confession showed that a plot for a mutiny of the most diabolical type was actually afoot, so that the apprehensions of Commander MacKenzie and his officers were not due to sudden panic. Philip Spencer had made a brief cruise in the *John Adams*, after which he had been forced to resign on account of his "disgraceful and scandalous conduct", but had been reappointed to the *Somers* through his father's influence, and admitted just before the execution that he had cherished the plan of mutiny and piracy ever since he entered the Navy.

<sup>1</sup> "Proceedings of the Naval Court-martial in the Case of Alexander Slidell MacKenzie, p. 35.

Captain Miller continued:

"Commander MacKenzie left three sons who received their early education in Morristown; Alexander Slidell, who attained the rank of Lieutenant-Commander and was killed on June 13th, 1867, while on an expedition against the natives in the island of Formosa; Ronald, who graduated at the head of his class at West Point, and who became, through daring exploits, the youngest Major-General in the Civil War; and Morris R. S., Rear Admiral of the U. S. Navy, who has returned to live in the town of his early schooldays."

Directly opposite MacCulloch Hall was the home of Lieut. Calbraith Raymond Perry Rodgers, whose work in locating the dangers to navigation along the treacherous coast near Nantucket now enable thousands of passengers to make the trip to Europe much more safely.

"His scientific ability, his record at the reduction of Vera Cruz, and at the capture of Tobasco during the Mexican War, had already given him a reputation, which in 1853 brought him the much sought for position of Flag Lieutenant on board the old *Constitution*. To recount the service of 'Carp' Rodgers, as he was familiarly known in the Navy, would be to give the story of all that was best and highest. Born of a family which has ever been famous in the annals of our naval history, he kept its honor bright, and transmitted a heritage worthily maintained by three sons now in the Army and Navy."

(Rear Admiral C. R. P. Rodgers was born in Brooklyn, N. Y., November 14th, 1819. His father was Commodore George Washington Rodgers, younger brother of Commodore John, and his mother was a sister of Commodore Perry. He became a midshipman in 1833; served on the *Brandywine* and *Vincennes*; during the Seminole war he commanded the schooner *Phoenix*. He was actively engaged during the Mexican War, especially in



blockading the coast. 1856-57 served on Coast Survey. Was appointed in 1861 Commandant of Midshipmen at the Annapolis Naval Academy. Distinguished himself, when in command of frigate *Wabash*, at the battle of Port Royal, November 7th, 1861. Was Fleet Captain in attack on Charleston, April 7th, 1863, and subsequently in the South Atlantic blockading squadron. In 1863-64 commanded steam sloop *Iroquois*. Was made full captain July 25th, 1866. He commanded the flagship *Franklin* on the European Station in 1869-70. June, 1874, he was commissioned as Rear Admiral, and made Superintendent of the Naval Academy; and in 1878-80, he commanded the naval forces in Pacific. Retired November 14th, 1881. Died January 8th, 1892.)

His eldest son, Rear Admiral Raymond Perry Rodgers received ten numbers of merit when executive officer on the *Iowa* in the battle of Santiago. His other sons are Col. Alexander Rodgers, U. S. A., whose son Lieut. Alexander Rodgers gave his life for his country in the recent war in France, and Rear Admiral Thomas Slidell Rodgers, U. S. N.

"With the MacKenzies and Rodgers in Morristown it naturally followed from the intermarriage between the three families that the Perrys should have been there also. First and foremost among them was Matthew C. Perry, the Commodore and diplomatist, who came there upon returning from his successful mission to Japan."

Commodore Perry sailed from Norfolk, November 24th, 1852. On July 8th, 1853, with the steam frigates *Susquehanna* and *Mississippi*, towing the sloops-of-war *Saratoga* and *Plymouth*, he moved slowly up the Bay of Yedo and dropped anchor off Uraga, a city twenty-seven miles from the capital, Yedo (Tokio). This was the first appearance of a steamer in Yedo Bay; and great was the astonishment of the natives to see the huge ships approaching directly against the wind.

Perry, in coming to the exclusive nation, had decided fairly to outdo them in exclusiveness, and when the Vice-Governor of Uruga appeared in a small boat and an interpreter declared his rank, he was kept waiting until he had explained why he, and not the Governor, had come. Furthermore when the gangway was lowered and the dignitary came on board, he was by no means permitted to see Commodore Perry. Perry, because of his rank as the great ambassador of the President, would meet no one less than a "counselor of the Empire" (cabinet minister). However, Lieutenant Contee, acting as Perry's representative, informed the Vice-Governor of the friendly mission on which the Americans had come, and of the letter written by the President to the Emperor, which Commodore Perry would deliver with appropriate formalities. The Vice-Governor's immediate answer was that "Nagasaki was the only place, according to the laws of Japan, for negotiating foreign business, and that it would be necessary for the squadron to go there." To this "he was told that the Commodore had come purposely to Uruga because it was near to Yedo, and that he *should not go to Nagasaki*; that he expected the letter to be duly and properly received where he then was; that his intentions were perfectly friendly, but that he would allow no indignity."<sup>1</sup>

At seven o'clock the next morning two large boats came alongside the *Susquehanna* bringing the Governor of Uruga. Again the exclusive Commodore would not deign to treat with an official beneath his rank, but delegated Captains Buchanan and Adams to confer with him. The first suggestion from the new conferee was "Nagasaki"; and again this met with an emphatic refusal.

The Governor now requested an opportunity to send to Yedo for further instructions. This he said would require four days; he was informed the Commodore would wait *only three*.

<sup>1</sup> Hawk's "Narrative of the Expedition to Japan," compiled from Perry's notes.

As can be easily imagined, the communications taken to Yedo by the Governor of Uraga had the effect of an earthquake. For even if the Japanese were not to be shaken out of their prejudice against foreigners by Perry's friendly purpose, they were tremendously disturbed by his individual firmness and power. Returning on the day appointed by Perry, the Governor proceeded to arrange with Captains Buchanan and Adams the time, place, and even the minutest details for the formal delivery and acceptance of the letter.

Two days later (July 14th) shortly before eight o'clock, the *Susquehanna* and the *Mississippi* moved down the bay and inshore, toward a large and highly decorated reception hall which the Japanese had quickly erected. At a signal from the *Susquehanna*, three hundred officers, sailors, and marines filled fifteen launches and cutters, and with stately procession moved toward the shore. When they had gone halfway, a salute of thirteen guns from the *Susquehanna* began to boom and re-echo among the hills; this was to announce that the great Commodore, the august ambassador of the President, upon whom no Japanese eye had yet been privileged to gaze, was embarking in his barge.

On the arrival of the Commodore, his suite of officers formed a double line along the landing-place, and as he passed up between they fell into order behind him. The procession then took up its march toward the house of reception, the route to which was pointed out by the Governor of Uraga and his interpreter, who preceded the party. The marines led the way, and with the sailors following, the Commodore was duly escorted up the beach.

As Perry and his suite entered the reception hall, magnificent in its hangings of violet colored silk and fine cotton, two princes who were seated on the left, rose, bowed, and then resumed their seats. They had been appointed by their government to receive the documents, and their dignity was appalling; during the entire

interview they sat with statuesque formality uttering not a word nor making a gesture. The complete ceremonies occupied not more than half an hour. For some minutes after the Commodore had taken his seat there was absolute silence, broken finally by the Japanese interpreter asking the American interpreter if the letters were ready for delivery, and stating that the princes were ready to receive them.

The Commodore, upon this being communicated to him, beckoned to two boys who stood in the lower hall to advance, when they came forward bearing handsome boxes which contained the President's letter and other documents. Two stalwart negroes, gorgeously appareled, following immediately in rear of the boys, received the boxes from the hands of the bearers, opened them, took out the letters, and laid them upon the lid of a Japanese box (placed there for the purpose) all in perfect silence.

The Commodore then directed his interpreter to inform the Japanese that he should leave in two or three days, but would return the following spring for an answer. When they inquired if he should return with all four vessels, he gave the prompt assurance, "All of them and probably more, as these are only a portion of the squadron."

A few days later Perry sailed for China, remaining in Hong Kong until January 14th, when he once more set sail for Japan, coming to anchor within twenty miles of Yedo on February 13th, 1854.

On the 8th of March, the day set for beginning the negotiations, the Commodore, with five hundred men and three bands of music, went ashore to the "Treaty House," erected for this especial occasion.

Three weeks of conference followed. In the middle of the negotiations Perry delivered to the Japanese the presents that the storeship had lately brought from America. Amongst these were



agricultural implements, clocks, two telegraph instruments, three lifeboats, and a Lilliputian railway. The last had a locomotive, tender, car, and rails, but was so small that it could scarcely carry a child of six. The Japanese, however, were not to be cheated out of a ride, and so betook themselves to the roof of the train, and it was a spectacle not a little ludicrous to behold a dignified official whirling around the circular road at the rate of twenty miles an hour, with his loose robes flying in the wind, clinging desperately to the edge of the roof, and grinning with intense interest. In return the Japanese brought generous presents of lacquered work, pongee, umbrellas, dolls, and various other things, together with the substantial remembrances of two hundred sacks of rice and three hundred chickens.

On March 31st, 1854, Commodore Perry and four Japanese commissioners signed a treaty written in the English, Dutch, and Chinese languages. This guaranteed succor and protection to shipwrecked Americans; permission for a ship in distress, or overtaken by storm, to enter any Japanese port; the opening of the ports Simoda and Hakodadi, where Americans could secure water, wood, coal, and provisions, and enjoy, with some restrictions, trade relations.

Larger privileges were later granted by the treaties of 1857 and 1858. England, quick to follow the advantage gained by the United States, six months after Perry (September, 1854), also secured commercial rights, and Russia and Holland were only a few months later. Thus if Perry's expedition had been planned solely for our own commercial profit, there might have been disappointment. But the prestige gained by the American commodore, who had shown himself such an able diplomat, and the honor that came to our nation in having drawn Japan from her isolation, proved an ample recompense.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "A Short History of the United States Navy," by Clark, Stevens, Alden, Krafft.

Returning to Captain Miller's enumeration of the quota furnished by Morristown to the Navy of the United States we read:

"In 1853, Commodore S. H. Stringham was commander-in-chief of the European Station, with the old *Cumberland* as his flagship. Henry A. Wise was then his Flag-Lieutenant. Wise's father had been a naval officer, and his son after him was another. While Wise was on the European Station, a daughter was born to him at Spezia, who afterwards became Mrs. J. W. Miller. "While I am on this personal subject," says Captain Miller, "I may be permitted to mention, that I am proud of the fact that my son served as an ordinary seaman on board the *Yankee* in 1898, in the Spanish War, and married into a family which once lived in Morristown, and gave three of its members to the Navy—Capt. John K. Duer, his son, Alexander Duer, and a cousin, Rufus K. Duer, late a Lieutenant-Commander.

"Stringham began his service as a midshipman in the War of 1812. During the Civil War he commanded the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, capturing Forts Hatteras and Clark. He ended his duty as Port Admiral of New York. His association with Morristown was through visits to his son-in-law, Capt. J. B. Creighton. The lives of these two men connect the old navy with the new; they were full of activities in all parts of the world.

"Commander Joseph Warren Revere was long a resident of Morristown. He inherited a spirit of patriotism, a taste for engraving, architecture and literature, and a love of horsemanship from his ancestor, Paul Revere; while his Christian name added an ambition to emulate, in the army, the reputation of the Revolutionary general who was killed at Bunker Hill. His service included many years in the navy and subsequently in the army in command of a brigade during the Civil War. His 'Keel and Saddle' tells of his forty years afloat and ashore. . . . My

recollection of all that Captain Revere was to us schoolboys in 1861 will not down. I well remember all his yarns, and his sympathetic interest as we youngsters confided to him, at his place on the Mendham Road, our desire to become soldiers or sailors. It was there that he drilled us, laughing at our awkward manual of arms, and when he left for the war, there followed in two years into the navy:

“George M. Totten, the son of a naval officer whose widow lived in Morristown; George Church, who, after graduating at the Naval Academy and served for several years, then resigned to become Commander of the first Naval Militia Battalion in Brooklyn; Morris R. S. MacKenzie and Raymond Rodgers, whose names have been already mentioned; J. Cummings Vail, the son of the distinguished scientist; Theodore T. Wood, who was the most popular man in the class of 1868 at the Naval Academy, and whose genial manners made him the joy of every wardroom mess until his career was cut short by death at Norfolk on February 4th, 1886; and myself,” said Captain Miller.

“Many, if not all of you,” he went on, “remember Captain William M. Gamble, who lived among us long after he was placed on the retired list on account of ill-health incident to arduous service. He married Miss Eliza Canfield, who still survives him. She and his three daughters are constant visitors to Morristown.”

(Captain Gamble's second daughter married Gen. Wm. M. Black, late Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army. Her mother, Mrs. Gamble, died in 1918.)

“Wm. M. Gamble was born on March 25th, 1825, and was the son of John Marshall Gamble, who served with distinction under the elder Porter during the War of 1812. He graduated at the Naval Academy in the class of 1842, and came into prominence at the opening of the Civil War as executive officer of the *New*

*Ironsides*. Later while serving in the Gulf Squadron, his ship, the monitor *Osage*, was blown up by torpedoes in Blakeley River. Nothing daunted he applied for another vessel, was ordered to the *Powhatan* and gave chase to the *Alabama*. It is needless to say that his old, antiquated vessel could not catch the famous blockade runner, even though Gamble used up all his pork and barrels, forcing his boilers in a vain attempt to capture Semmes.

"His house on Maple Avenue was purchased from the prize money he received during the war, and there he died on October 19th, 1896, leaving to us many reminiscences of his bold, brave, bluff, and jovial nature.

"Commodore Robert B. Hitchcock, who entered the Navy in 1825, passed many summers in Morristown with Mr. G. E. Harney, until his death in 1886. Hitchcock was noted as a mathematician of prominence, and an expert in ordnance, and served in the Navy Department during a part of the Civil War, although he had command of the *Susquehanna* in the Gulf Squadron prior to that time. He was retired in 1864.

"Rear Admiral James McIntosh was the father of Mrs. Cox, long a resident of Morristown; while that famous blockade runner of the Confederacy, Captain Bullock, had a home on South Street before the war.

"It is not, perhaps, necessary in this assemblage to recall the names of Frank Turnbull; all who knew him loved and respected him. Or of Nicholas Roosevelt, who married Miss Dean." (Miss Dean and my sister were very great friends in their early days.) "The respect of his fellow-citizens was only equaled by the love which all his old friends and classmates had for him while in the Navy."

In speaking of his elder brother Capt. J. W. Miller says:

"Nor is it fitting for me here on this spot to go too deeply into the record of one who was born in the room above us. Our



relationship, as brothers, was too close; my admiration for him as an officer too great. The full story of his life should be left to comrades—like his intimate friend Schley, or his classmate George Dewey.

“Henry William Miller entered the Naval Academy in 1852. After graduating he served in China on board the famous old frigate *Minnesota*. In November, 1859, he was ordered to the *Mohican*, fitting out for the South African Squadron. The *Mohican* captured the last slave ship, *Erie*, ever taken, with nine hundred negroes on board. The *Erie* was sent to New York, and the captain hanged in the courtyard of the Tombs for piracy. The *Mohican* on her return to this country joined the South Atlantic Squadron. Miller commanded a division in the battle of Port Royal, participated in the capture of Brunswick, Ga., and Fernandina, Fla., served with Goldsborough in the Gulf, and with Nichols (the father of one of our members), on the James River. He resigned in 1866. One has written of him: ‘The superior grain and fine qualities of the man made themselves felt in civil life and he became a prominent and leading citizen of Morristown, where, at the old homestead in which he was born and lived, he was wont to gather about him many of the “oldsters” who ever delighted in his true hospitality. The uplifting influence of his Christian character can scarcely be overestimated; it permeated the ships in which he served, and the locality where he lived.’

“Among other officers whose names are associated with Morristown are: Lieutenant-Commander Francis A. Miller, Lloyd Phoenix, Medical Director James Rufus Tryon, who was formerly Chief of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery; Paymasters Burtis, Caswell and Noyes, Chief Engineer Elijah Laws, Lieut. Wm. Watts, Rear Admiral J. V. B. Bleeker, Rear Admiral P. H. Cooper, Captain Arthur P. Nazro, Lieutenant Commander W. P.

White, Lieutenant-Commander A. B. Hoff, Lieutenant Ridgeley Hunt, and Loyal Farragut, who served in the Navy with his father before going to West Point."

In this congenial atmosphere, surrounded by many friends of his own profession, Lieutenant Radford passed such time as he was able to devote to his home and family. That he kept in touch with his relatives in the West is shown by his correspondence. His brother John, whose wife had died after five years of wedded life, had betaken himself to California, and the following letter concerning him gives a graphic description of the life there at that period. The writer is Lieutenant Radford's cousin, Major William Clark Kennerly, son of his uncle James.

"Sacramento City (Cala.) Friday,

"30th Augt. 1850.

"Dear friend,

"I am writing at the request of John, whose situation prevents him from undertaking that pleasant task *in propria persona*, which being rendered into plain English, means, *with his own fingers*. I must explain more fully.—

"During the last three weeks this city and vicinity has been the scene of great excitement and great doings; as you will see by the papers.—The origin and commencement of the difficulty must have gone to the States by the last Steamer.—The squatters had taken possession of certain lots in this city and were endeavoring to make themselves comfortable and hoped to become in time independent. To be sure, these lots were claimed by certain other persons who had in fact been in treaty with old Capt. Sutter and had paid money and received deeds for the same some time previous to the squatting. . . . But they were speculators, land pirates, capitalists—and such names outweighed, crushed down and utterly abolished all deeds from Sutter in the minds of

free, independent, destiny loving, law despising democratic squat-terdom. . . . They had been in the mines, had labored, and had not been able to compass a fortune in a year. An opportunity seemed to offer itself to make fortunes without visiting the hated mines and without labor. . . . It required only an ordinary, modest, American effort, to arrange things comfortably, and these were the people to make it—and they *squatted!* But the speculators, land pirates, or whatever else they were called, rose when others squatted, and tried the law. And, it appearing to the Judicial authorities that the right to the property was in these people with the hard names, directed that these noble but misguided people, these creatures of impulse and squatterism, should be dispossessed—which was done, and some of them, who showed their contempt for the law by kicking up and conducting themselves in too lively a manner, were committed to the prison ship. Their friends attempted to rescue them, and paraded the streets with guns, etc. The Mayor with his officials met them, and ordered them to lay down their arms, which the leader of the squatters not only declined doing, but he, with great coolness, directed his men to fire on the Mayor and posse, and the Sheriff and Assessor were killed; the Mayor wounded, it is thought mortally, but the squatters were dispersed and several killed. John was of course conspicuous in the affair—bravest of the brave, and liveliest of the lively, spurred on both by his duty as an officer (Deputy Sheriff) and his love of fun as a man.—He escaped without a wound, but, two or three days after, he with others went out of town a few miles to arrest some leading squatters. A fight ensued, and John was shot through the arm, above the wrist, breaking the large bone. His arm is now doing very well, and he thinks that in the course of about six weeks he can use it *a little*. I saw the surgeon, (a very skillful one) dressing it this morning, and although it appeared to be quite a severe wound,

yet it seemed to be improving fast. John's general health is excellent and he appears as usual in fine spirits.

"Clark Kennerly."

A letter from his uncle William Radford II, dated May 23rd, 1851, reads in part: "We have been flattering ourselves that you would pay us a visit, and regretted that you did not extend your visit when you and your wife came to Richmond. The winter having been mild and open there is a fine prospect for birds this year. Remember us kindly to your wife . . . and tell her it will always give us great pleasure to see her in Bedford. Carlton and his wife are with us at present. He expects to be ordered to California."

(Carlton Radford was the sixth child of William Radford II, a graduate of West Point, and a lieutenant in the U. S. Army. In the Civil War he went with the South.)

On August 25th, 1849, a daughter, Mary Lovell (Mrs. Randolph Coyle, of Washington), was born to the Radford household; and on March 28th, 1851, a son, who was named for his father.

On January 21st, 1851, Lieut. William Radford was detached from the *Rendezvous* at New York, and the following June received orders to report for the command of the U. S. Store Ship *Lexington*, then fitting out for a cruise to the Pacific. This cruise proved to be a trying one in many ways for the *Lexington's* commander, and he found himself confronted at its termination with the first sorrow that had fallen athwart his happy married days.



## CHAPTER XIV

### BETWEEN CRUISES

AN extract from the "Regulations for the Uniform and Dress of the Navy of the United States," was forwarded to Lieutenant Radford along with his sailing orders, on July 26th, 1851, which regulations he was directed by the Department to have "strictly carried out." They were as follows:

"The hair of all persons belonging to the Navy, when in actual service, is to be kept short. No part of the beard is to be worn long excepting whiskers, which shall not descend more than one inch below the tip of the ear, and thence in a line towards the corners of the mouth."

Sailing immediately from New York upon receipt of his final orders, the *Lexington* touched first at Rio de Janeiro, and there is a letter written by Lieutenant Radford to his father-in-law, from that city, dated October 5th, 1851, which reads in part:

"Capt. Inman of the United States Navy leaves this place tomorrow for New York, and he has been kind enough to offer to leave this, together with a small package for Mary at your office, and I hope you may be there when he calls, as he remains but a few hours in the city.

"I perused with much interest and feeling your very kind letter given to me on the eve of my departure from the United States, and nothing could be more gratifying to me than to have received a letter expressing so kindly a feeling for my eternal happiness from any one, but when it comes from one whom

I must deem sincere in all he expresses, I can but return my warmest thanks. I would read the books you gave me, if it were but to comply with your wishes so kindly urged upon me.

"We have had a pleasant voyage to this place though rather a long one. . . . I have written everything I could think of to Mary, consequently my letter to you is very short. I suppose you know this is a place of immense commerce. I heard some merchants say that coffee was up now, as many vessels were loading for the U. S. but they thought it would come down as soon as the press of business was over. This is all the commercial news I can give you."

I cannot do otherwise just here than say a brief word in regard to my grandfather Lovell, who was one of the kindest and saintliest of men. He was Superintendent of the first Episcopal Sunday-school ever established in New Orleans (Christ Church), where he was engaged for several years in business with his brother-in-law, Mr. James Colles; and his voluminous correspondence with both clergy and laity prove his charities to have covered a wide field. All of which did not prevent his being a veteran of the War of 1812, during which he served as a private "in Captain Murray's Company, Colonel Murray's Regiment . . . raised for the purpose of guarding the City and Port of New York, . . . and was engaged in said City, on Long Island and Staten Island during the whole time of said service, etc., etc."<sup>1</sup>

From Rio, the *Lexington* proceeded to Valparaiso, where they spent Christmas, 1851; reaching San Francisco at the beginning of March, 1852.

From that port Lieutenant Radford writes to the Secretary of the Navy, dated March 11th, . . . "Inquiries have been made

<sup>1</sup> Extract from Declaration for Pension under Act of February 14th, 1871.

as directed by the Hon'ble Secretary of the Navy for Passed Mid'n Wm. Henry Smith. He sailed from this port in the latter part of the year 1850 for Manilla, touching at the Sandwich Islands, since which time neither he, or the vessel has been heard from. A vessel was wrecked off the Island of Formosa soon after he left the Sandwich Islands, and his father supposes it might have been his vessel; or if not, that the vessel has been capsized and all hands perished." Here we have a glimpse of an old-time tragedy of the sea.

Another letter, dated March 13th, to Mr. Lovell, says:

"I received your very long and very kind letter of the 22nd of Dec./51, for the which I owe you many thanks—both for the letter and for the kindness you have shown to yours and mine. For are they not yours as well as mine, those dear little children? They are a great trouble as well as a great blessing. 'Tis the only consolation I have in my absence to know that my wife and children have kind parents who are willing to render them all the kindness in their power, which is an article not to be purchased, therefore I feel doubly thankful for it. Poor little Minn, how much anxiety she must have given you." (Mary Lovell Radford, and baby William.)

Then, after some correspondence about business matters the letter continues: "I am sorry to hear you are complaining of pain in your eyes: I would repeat what I have told you before about reading with bad lights if it did not sound too much like 'I told you so.'

"Walking in the streets of San Francisco the other day I met your brother Mr. Lovell" (Benj. D. Lovell), "and after talking with him some time made an appointment to meet him. . . . He spoke of going to Oregon and I tried to dissuade him from it. . . .

"There has been very much rain since I arrived here, and every

one says the miners will make large returns which they would not have done had not these rains fallen. It has thrown me back, so that I shall not get off before the 5th of April, but 'it is an ill wind that blows no one any good,' and I suppose it is so of the rain.

"This is the most remarkably peopled country in the world; 'rapscallions' of every nation; every person running after the 'dust'; everything purchased for money down; no trust, no confidence, stores paid for always monthly in advance—even down to the bed you sleep on at the hotel. I stumble upon men from every city in the world I have visited, all with anxious countenances—looking out for the main chance, as one unfortunate month sometimes causes the heaviest houses to fail, for they all have weak backs! Dining one day when in town at an eating-house, I saw a servant waiting on me who seemed out of place so I entered into conversation with him, and he soon let me into his history. He had been in a large business firm but a few days before—this had failed, and he being without money had 'shipped' in an eating-house for fifty dollars per month.

"John, my brother, told me that at one time the large hotel at Sacramento had as servants four lawyers and three doctors, and that he had seen a man who was on the Bench as Judge in Missouri driving an ox team taking truck to and from the wharf. A strange state of things where intellect counts for nothing, but it is now beginning to tell, and in a few years things will take their proper level. You would not, were you here, be astonished at the proceedings of the Vigilance Committee, as violent diseases require violent remedies; so when robberies, murder and every other crime became outrageous, powerful examples had to be made that good might result from it. The terror among the evil-doers was very great whilst the said Committee used the rope! They are still in existence, and when their services are again necessary



will show themselves. They are composed of the most correct people of the Country, and I hope they will not be compelled to act again, but when the same crime stalks about the Country they will show themselves as heretofore.

"Fortunes cannot be made here now as have been made for the last two years, but any steady, saving person with capital might accumulate a fortune in a few years. Think of paying seven or eight hundred dollars per month for a store, and that only one floor, and some are even much more extravagant than that.

"Gambling houses are at almost every corner. Men and women throwing the dice—crying out all the time: 'Make your game, Gentlemen,—the more you put down the more you take'; and like phrases. One cannot but be astonished that vice is so common and public, but time will correct even this also in a measure, as I am told there is less of it now than there was a few months back.

"Now I have given you some of the horrors, I will tell you that there are several churches here which are generally well attended, though I am told that even the gentlemen of the robe have a strong 'itching for the dust,' but I am not astonished in a community where every person is eager in pursuit of the same object, that every one should fall into the same current and be driven along without the power or disposition to struggle against the tide.

"Wm. Radford."

Again referring to Mrs. Atherton's book "California," we read:

"At the end of 1849 a hundred thousand immigrants had poured into the territory. A similar number arrived in 1850, advancing the population of San Francisco alone from five thousand to nearly thirty thousand. Naturally, it was easy for criminals to slip in singly or in hordes, for all claimed to be

bound for the mines, which were turning millions a month into the pockets of the industrious, the persistent, and the lucky."

A band of criminals, composed partly of Mexicans and largely of ticket-of-leave men from Australia, terrorized the town. Nobody stirred abroad at night; and those that patronized the gambling rooms entered before dusk and remained until daylight. Some were arrested, but their lawyers were well paid and specious, and it was seldom that a judge could be found to convict them. Theft, robberies, burglary, murder were all in the day's work, . . . and a community of unspeakable wickedness . . . flourished openly on the outskirts of the City at Clark's Point. The harried citizens endured their outrages from the end of 1849 to the beginning of 1851, hoping against hope that the law would prove equal to its obligations. . . . But although the San Franciscan is noted for his philosophy and his patience, he is equally distinguished for the sudden cessation of those virtues . . . and suddenly, without warning, in June, 1851, the citizens of San Francisco "sat up," and formed the first of the two famous Committees of Vigilance.

One hundred and eighty-four of the wealthiest, most prominent, and (what was more to the point, as it meant neglect of business), the most industrious and enterprising of San Francisco's men formed themselves into a secret Committee of Vigilance for the purpose of cleaning up the city morally and restoring it to order.

"Executions followed immediately upon violations of law, and all of the gang of desperadoes were ordered to leave California at once. Some were shipped off, and others terrified by the hanging of their 'pals,' fled without further invitation."

The above letter from Mr. Joseph Lovell was, I believe, the only communication from home that reached Lieutenant Radford throughout the year and two months' duration of this cruise,

all other mail arriving at each appointed address after his ship had touched at that port and gone. The last mail sent to him was forwarded from Valparaiso with the accompanying letter:

“Valparaiso, Chili, July, 14th, 1852.

“My dear Sir,

“The accompanying letters from two important personages, your pretty wife, and our Minister at the Court of Santiago, came to hand a few days after you sailed, and I embrace the opportunity of forwarding them to you by Purser Walsh who returns to the U. S. by way of the Isthmus.

The *Vandalia* and *Vincens* arrived at this port some four or five days after you left, and are now about spreading their sails for home. Miss Hobson took unto herself a husband in the shape of Lieutenant Werden soon after the arrival of the *Vandalia*, and the officers have had quite a gay time of it. They gave the bridal party an elegant entertainment on board the *Vandalia* which was well attended and went off finely. . . .

“There is nothing new here. . . .

“J. G. McPheeters.”<sup>1</sup>

The joy of Lieutenant Radford's home coming was tempered by the receipt at the Quarantine Station of the following letter:

“My dear Radford,

“We are looking for you daily, altho' I think myself your ship cannot possibly reach New York before 20th Sept. to 10th Oct.

“I send this letter with one from Mary to apprise you at the earliest possible moment of the loss of our dear little Willie. It pleased God to take him from us . . . on 17th July last, after

<sup>1</sup> Probably a member of the important business house of “Hobson & Company,” Valparaiso. These houses transacted business, and forwarded mails for the officers of the U. S. fleets.

12 days of great suffering. It was a great shock to Mary, but she bears up under it as a Christian woman should do, knowing that the child is taken from the dangers and temptations of the world, and made perfectly happy in Heaven. . . .

"We all feel severely little Willie's death. He just began to lisp a word or two, & to manifest such a sweet disposition . . . as to give the promise of no ordinary character. . . .

"We have had the pleasure of Mrs. Kearny & family's company for a few days. I regret that they will leave ere you can arrive.

"May God bless & keep you, & give you a safe arrival, & many happy days with us on shore,

"Affectionately Yours,

"J. Lovell."

"Sept. 5th, /52."

Detached from the *Lexington* on September 22nd, 1852, Lieutenant Radford returned to his home in Morristown, and there then ensued a period of some three years during which we find mention of his being on temporary duty at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and of his serving as witness upon numerous courts-martial.

In June, 1855, he was in command of the U. S. Steamer *City of Boston*, with orders to prevent the Steamer *United States*, or any other connected with the filibustering expeditions of the time, from leaving the harbor.

This duty was not of long duration, as on July 20th, he was appointed a member of a committee to "examine and report on the different Life Boats," the other members of the said committee being Lieutenants De Camp and J. W. Livingston. A letter from the latter dated Long Branch, July 27th, 1855, shows no great enthusiasm on the part of the writer for the business in hand. It reads in part: "The examination will probably take



place off the Battery. . . . People must want something to do to be at such work this warm weather. . . .

"I heard in New York the Navy Board in Washington had finished their business and adjourned. . . . If they have not 'passed over' I would feel much obliged for that Commission, as I am in a hurry to acknowledge its receipt before I 'pass over Jordan.'"

On September 14th, 1855, Lieutenant Radford received his Commission as Commander, hence the title in the following letter:

"Navy Yard, N. Y., Sept. 19th, 1855.

"Dear Captain,

"I saw Livingston yesterday and he desired me to say to you to keep cool . . . he will inform you when your services are required on boat duty.

"A terrible row in these diggins about the Navy. All those that are turned out swear that their friends will certainly have them reinstated. . . . Those who have been put on furlough are quite cut up, while the reserve on full pay are as happy as clams at high water. As to myself I am like Mohamet's coffin, between Heaven and Earth. H—— has been furloughed for refusing to take command of the *San Jacinto*, and it is reported that Overton Carr is to command her, and that Commodore Stribling will take the East India Squadron.

"No changes have taken place here as yet except that A. F. V. Gray has relieved Jack Carter at the Rendezvous. . . . Write me a line if you have heard of any bricks. . . .

"Yours very truly,

"John De Camp."

In 1855 the Navy Department was paying out the "additional compensation" in the way of prize money, which was granted by an act of March 3rd to the officers and seamen who had served

in the Pacific Ocean on the coast of California and Mexico during the war; and the following is an extract from an official paper addressed to Lieut. Wm. Radford at that time:

“. . . The amount due you on the U. S. Ship *Warren* is \$746.00.

“I herewith enclose you duplicate receipt to be signed and returned to this office. . . .

“A. G. Allen,  
“Navy Agent.”

During the year 1855 Lieutenant Radford was making every effort to obtain a pension for the widow of Lieut. Wm. Preston Griffin, who had died in 1853, and the following is a letter from Commodore Shubrick relating to this matter.

“Washington D. C. 28th April, 1855,

“My dear Sir,

“Dr. Clymer being absent at sea, Mrs. Clymer has placed your letter of the 23rd inst. to him, in my hands.

“I have obtained from the proper office, and enclose herewith the printed form of application for a widow's pension with directions how to proceed in the case.

“Mrs. Griffin is entitled to 160 acres of Bounty Land, under the law passed at the last session of Congress. You will find also included with this a printed paper showing how she is to proceed to obtain it.

“If Mrs. Griffin is in your neighborhood, be so good as to present my kindest regards to her—it will give me great pleasure to serve her in any way.

“I am respectfully yours,

“Lieut. Radford.

W. B. Shubrick.”

(Commodore William Branford Shubrick was born on Bull's Island, S. C., October 31st, 1790. He went to Harvard in 1805 but left there in June, 1806, upon receiving his appointment as midshipman in the Navy. Was made Lieutenant, January, 1813, and ordered to the frigate *Constitution*. Took part in the capture of the *Cyane* and *Levant* in February, 1815; and was placed in command of the latter, receiving thanks and a sword from the South Carolina Legislature, and a medal from Congress. In 1815-18 sailed around the world in the *Washington*, the first U. S. vessel to make this cruise. Was commissioned Captain in 1831. Commanded the West India Squadron 1838-40. During the war with Mexico he commanded on Pacific coast, taking and holding Mazatlan, Guaymas, La Paz, San Blas, and other ports. In August, 1858, he sailed with a fleet for Paraguay, where, in January of the following year he exacted reparation for an attack on a U. S. vessel, receiving for his arrangement of this affair a sword from the Argentine authorities, and much praise at home. In 1861 he refused to forsake the government he had served so long, though some expected him to cast his lot with his native state. He was retired July, 1862, with rank of Rear Admiral.

His daughter married Dr. George Clymer, U. S. N., to whom Rear Admiral Shubrick refers in the above letter. Dr. and Mrs. Clymer's daughter married the Hon. Thomas F. Bayard, of Delaware, at that time Ambassador to Great Britain.)

The following letter is from Captain Du Pont (later Rear Admiral).

"My dear Radford,

"I received your kind note only Tuesday of this week which must account for my apparent negligence in replying.

"Let me assure you that I appreciate most fully the manly and generous spirit which prompted it, and I was very much

gratified to hear from you. Many things are published and uttered that are not easy to bear and, as Foote says, are calculated to send the wolf up to a man's heart, but fortunately when my conscience is clear my skin becomes correspondingly thick.

"If I wanted support, all that I should care for would be just such letters as yours from sources equally unblemished to make me equal to any contest we are likely to have.

"Turner is at my elbow listening and disturbing me, or I should have something more to say.

"Will you please make my best regards to Mrs. Radford and excuse this very hurried note, written under great inconveniences,

"Believe me yours most thankfully,

"S. F. Dupont."

Underneath this in a different handwriting are the words:

"My dear Radford, I just add a line to Du Pont's—the first chance I have had for years of saying 'how do you do' to you. These are stirring times, arn't they? I have to keep close to Du Pont . . . for fear of a surprise, and his being *thrashed*—the Devil is united with all the rascals in this neighborhood against all the good men of our service, but I never felt keener for a fight nor more sure of Victory—God bless you,

"Ever your old friend,

"T. Turner."

(Thomas Turner, or "Tom Turner," as my father always spoke of him, was born in Washington, D. C., December 23rd, 1808. He entered the Navy as Midshipman April 21st, 1825; Passed Midshipman June 4th, 1831; Lieutenant in 1835. Served in the frigate *Columbia*, flagship of the East India Squadron, 1838-41, during which time he participated in the destruction of the Malay pirate towns of Quallat Battoo and Mucke, on the island



of Sumatra, January 1st, 1839. Commanded storeship *Fredonia*, Gulf Squadron, from June till October, 1847. Promoted to Commander September 14th, 1855; (we see by this he was not one who had cause to complain of the activities of the retiring board) and had charge of the sloop *Saratoga*, on the Home Squadron, 1858-60. Commanded the *New Ironsides*, in the South Atlantic Squadron, and was highly commended for the skill and ability with which he handled this vessel in the attacks on the forts at Charleston, 7th April, 1863, and in other operations there until August, 1863. He was made Commodore December 13th, 1862, and Rear Admiral June 24, 1868. He and my father were very devoted friends.)

In the year 1855 and the early part of 1856, promotion was at a standstill in the Navy. There were men who had reached the age of sixty without having attained to any rank higher than that of Lieutenant. This was partly owing to the shortage of ships, which was at that time so great that many officers were given leave by the government to take command of merchant ships for which they received very high pay. Amongst officers who accepted command of U. S. Mail steamers during those days were Lieut. (later Admiral) D. D. Porter and Lieutenant Hern- don, the latter of whom lost his life by the foundering of the Mail steamer *Central America*, during a gale in the Gulf of Mexico.

To overcome this difficulty a retiring Board was formed which aroused a storm of protest from the older officers, but was naturally looked upon in more kindly fashion by the younger members of the service.

Speaking on December 20th, 1884, at the unveiling of the Du Pont statue, in Du Pont Circle, Washington, D. C., the Hon. Thomas F. Bayard, then U. S. Senator from Delaware, remarked: "In 1855, he<sup>1</sup> became a member of a board to promote the

<sup>1</sup>Du Pont.

efficiency of the Navy, and upon him fell the main weight of painful responsibility in the execution of this expurgating law. 'The cankers of a calm world and a long peace' needed excision, and the surgery was necessarily sharp and painful. It drew upon Captain Du Pont a great amount of personal and bitter hostility from the officers unfavorably affected by the law, when the names of the individuals selected for retirement, by reason of supposed disability and unfitness, were made known. His popularity in the Navy, which up to that time had been well-nigh universal, at once lessened and he was compelled to face a whirlwind of disappointed ambition, denunciation, and even personal slander and vilification. But he was in the path of duty, and he stood fast until the storm spent its force, leaving him shocked and saddened by its violence, but erect and true to his convictions, with not a stain upon his reputation and the arrows of defamation lying shattered at his feet."

Commodore Du Pont was two years in command of the East India Squadron, with the *Minnesota* as his flagship; and returned home to serve upon boards of examination, and commanded later the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

In another letter of Commodore Du Pont's of April 22nd, 1857, we read: ". . . I have been fortunate in getting so fine a command. I owe it I believe to the preference of the Minister, whom I have known for many years and not to any special claims of my own.

"My Navy friends seem very joyful at it. My own satisfaction is of course subdued in view of the responsibilities of such a command and a long separation from home. . . .

"I have just had a letter from Renshaw who is ordered as first. Lt. He is sore a little at his orders but is kind enough to say my having the command is some consolation to him. If you see him please encourage him (not to accept for he has already done

that) but to look forward almost certainly to a command, he being the Senior Lt. of a large Squadron, and to the important events which may occur in China. You can readily conceive how invaluable such an officer will be to me in such a ship, to say nothing of the comfort and pleasure of his being a personal friend to boot, etc.

(Signed) "S. F. Du Pont."

On September 23rd, 1858, Commander Radford was appointed Inspector of the "Third Lighthouse District," a post he held until October 10th, 1859. Many times during the years 1853-1858, he had applied for a command, but the command had not been forthcoming. Occupied, however with the various shore duties to which he was assigned, the years had passed pleasantly and happily with his family and surrounded by many warm friends.

The old Doughty Place which had been named by Mr. Lovell "Locust Grove," because of the number of those fragrant trees he had planted there, overlooked the Basking Ridge road, which separated it from his brother-in-law's estate. (Mr. James Colles married Harriet Wetmore, sister of Mrs. Lovell).

Here, in or about the year 1836, Mr. Colles built a handsome residence, beyond which stands MacCulloch Hall, home of the late Capt. J. W. Miller, whose mother had been a Miss MacCulloch.

Amongst the descendants of James and Harriet Wetmore Colles were: George Wetmore Colles, born 1836, whose widow is still a resident of Morristown; Harriet Augusta Colles, who married in 1845 Dr. John Thomas Metcalfe of New York; (their daughter, Gertrude, born March 15th, 1849, became the wife of Loyal Farragut, son of David G. Farragut, Admiral U. S. N.); Frances Colles, who married, May 15th, 1850, John Taylor Johnston, of New York. He was one of the original promoters of the

Metropolitan Museum, and its first President. His picture gallery was the most important in America at the time of its sale in 1877. Their daughter Emily married, November 12th, 1872, Robert W. de Forest, actually President of the Metropolitan Museum. The other children of Mr. and Mrs. John Taylor Johnston now living are: John Herbert Johnston, who married, in 1892, Celestine Noël; Frances Johnston, Mrs. Pierre Mali; and Eva Johnston, Mrs. Henry E. Coe.

In November, 1859, Commander Radford received orders to hold himself "in readiness for the command of the U. S. Steam Sloop of war, *Dacotah*, whose destination was China; but not until April, 1860, did the final order come to "proceed to Norfolk, Va.," and there join the ship. The story of this cruise, and the momentous decision he was called upon to make during its continuance, will be reserved for the following chapter.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE YANGTSZE KIANG

REPORTING at the Norfolk Navy Yard on April 23rd, 1860, Commander Radford found the *Dacotah* still far from being ready for sea. A week's trial trip, ending May 13th, resulted in the following report: "She has speed, and is very easily propelled ten knots. During the trial she has attained for a short time the speed of twelve and a quarter knots under steam alone." Hardly a rate of speed that would appeal to our Navy today!

On May 15th, Commander Radford went home on a week's leave, and returned bringing his wife and two children, of whom the writer of these pages, then in her sixth year, was one, to the hotel in Norfolk.

We did not remain to witness the sailing of the ship because my mother was recalled by the serious illness of my brother Stephen Kearny Radford, who had been left with his grandparents in Morristown.

On June 30th, the *Dacotah* weighed anchor and proceeded to sea. A twenty days' passage took her to Funchal, Madeira, where she put in for water, coal, and repairs. In Funchal there was an agreeable society composed of the families of naval officers who were on the British or U. S. African station, and of English residents. Among other Americans with whom Commander Radford there became acquainted were the wife and young daughters of Dr. Maxwell, Naval Surgeon of the U. S. S. *Portsmouth*. (Dr. Maxwell's eldest daughter married Capt. Thomas H. Eastman, of

the U. S. Navy; and to her I am indebted for very valuable assistance in obtaining data for these memoirs.)

From Rio de Janeiro Commander Radford reports his arrival on August 30th, twenty-nine days from Madeira, adding: "I intended going to the Cape of Good Hope from Madeira, touching at the island of Ascension; but after steaming some six days across the Calm Latitudes, and finding I was using twenty tons of coal per day more than I expected, I was compelled to put the ship under sail and come to this place. . . ."

From Rio the *Dacotah* continued her way to Capetown, arriving there October 9th. How she ever reached that port at all is a mystery since a report of her commander's dated "Capetown, October 16th, 1860," says: ". . . Upon cleaning and examining the boilers we found them rusted in holes in many places more than one third through; should the rapid corroding of the boilers continue, they will soon be unfit for use."

One of the most treasured possessions of my childhood was a short letter written to me by my father at that time from Capetown. It was on a card on which one of the sailors had painted a view of Table Mountain, and told of how a flying fish had fallen upon the *Dacotah's* deck and had been caught and cooked by his steward for the Commander's supper.

From Capetown the *Dacotah* proceeded to Point de Galles, Ceylon, where again they overhaul her engines, and from where the Commander reports on December 4th, 1860, that he has "a very complicated engine which requires much labor and time to keep in working order"; notwithstanding which he writes Commodore Stribling, Commander of the Asiatic Squadron, on the same date: "I trust I shall be able to report in person in a few days after the receipt of this."

Reaching Hong Kong in January, 1861, the engines and boilers of the *Dacotah* were there put in better shape, and in February

Commander Radford left that port for Shanghai with orders to remain there "for the protection of citizens of the United States."

"You will keep your ship and boats at all times ready for immediate service," is Commodore Stribling's order, "The insurgents being in great force at no great distance from Shanghai, may at any moment attempt to occupy the city. In such an event you will be prompt to render such aid and assistance to our countrymen residing on shore or afloat as they may require, or your limited needs afford. But you will in no case unite with other foreign ships or military forces except for the protection of the foreign settlement and ships in the river."

(It has taken a world-wide war to show that the interests of the United States cannot be entirely separated from those of other nations.)

"In all your intercourse with the Chinese," continues the order, "you will act with kindness and forbearance, and enjoin the same course upon all under your command. As the efficiency of a man-of-war depends mainly upon the health of her crew, I cannot too strongly urge upon you the necessity of paying special attention to the health and comfort of those under your command."

"You will write to me whenever you have any information to communicate. I wish particularly information in relation to the expedition under Admiral Sir James Hope, about to ascend the Yangtsze."

"Your letters may be directed to this place until the 25th of April."

"You will, on your passage to Shanghai, stop at Amoy, to communicate with Commander Schenck, of the *Saginaw*, or leave the orders herewith enclosed for him."

The following letter was written in reply to these orders:

" U. S. S. *Dacotah*,

" Shanghai, Feb. 28th, 1861.

" Sir,

" I have the honor to report my arrival at this place on the 27th inst. after a passage of twelve days, having been delayed by strong adverse winds. . . .

" I delivered your despatch to Commander Schenck at Amoy.

" Admiral Sir James Hope left this place some days since with several vessels, on his way up the Yangtze river. He has with him some European pilots, formerly employed on steamers on that river.

" Our countrymen at this point express great anxiety that our authorities shall have an expedition for observation in that quarter also. . . .

" I shall keep you promptly informed of events transpiring in this quarter.

" I am, Sir, very res'ply,

" Your obd't servant,

" Wm. Radford,

" Commander.

" Flag Officer C. K. Stribling,

" Com'dig E. India Squadron."

The next letter from the same to the same, dated " March 5th, 1861," reads:

" Since my last report intelligence has been received from the expedition of Admiral Hope up the river Yangtze. That officer had reached the city of Nanking, and had had an interview with the chief of the rebel party then in possession.

" The ' King ' expressed a friendly disposition toward the foreigners, and a hope that amicable relations might exist be-



tween the parties. He was also willing that foreigners should trade on the river.

"Admiral Hope left a gunboat at Nanking, and proceeded on his way to Hankow, which place he expected to find in possession of the 'rebels' with whom he would be obliged to open friendly relations. . . ."

In Capt. Thomas W. Blackiston's book, "Five Months on the Yang-Tsze," we read: "The Taiping rebellion originated about 1850, in the southern province of Kwang-si. The originator of the movement, or rather the one known to us as such, is Hung-tsiu-tsuen, the present 'Tienwang,' or Heavenly king. He was originally educated at a Protestant missionary school in the south of China.

"Seizing on the popular longing for the return of a Chinese dynasty he proclaimed himself as sent by heaven to drive out the Tartars, and to restore in his own person the succession to China.

"Professing, as a Christian, to abhor the vices and sins of the age, he called on all the virtuous of the land to extirpate rulers, who, both in their public laws and in their private acts, were standing examples of all that was base and vile in human nature. Crowds flocked to his standard. Putting himself at the head of his followers Hung-tsiu-tsuen marched northward, overthrowing every force that was sent to oppose him. So widespread was the disaffection throughout the country that he was able without much difficulty to establish himself in Nanking, on the Yang-Tsze Kiang, in 1853, and proclaim the inauguration of the Taiping dynasty, of which he nominated himself first emperor, or 'Heavenly king.' Since that time they have sent forces in different directions, and have been within a hundred miles of Peking, but retired from there early in 1854. Nanking has also withstood a two years' siege by the Imperialists.

"A year or two ago the Taipings had many friends, particu-

larly among Protestant missionaries, by whom they were looked on as Christians; but the bubble has burst on a nearer scrutiny, and now it is equally the fashion to abuse them. . . . 'I see no hope,' writes Captain Blackiston, 'of the Taipings becoming the dominant power in China, because they are simply unable to govern themselves . . . but neither do I see any prospect of the Manchoos reinstating themselves in their former position. There is more or less rebellion (not always Taiping) in every province except one in China. Something will spring from this state of disorder to restore order, as has been the case a dozen times before in the empire. . . . I have always had my opinion of the brigand-like character of the Taipings, but after seeing a good deal of both I must confess that I have no better opinion of the other party. . . . In the meantime, looking on the mighty highway—the silvery track of the great river, where the forerunners and pioneers of coming peace are going and returning—I anxiously await the time when the tide of disorder shall have flowed by.'

In a letter of Flag Officer Stribling's to the Secretary of the Navy, dated Hong Kong, March 13th, the Commander-in-Chief writes in part: ". . . I expect to leave here about the first of next month for Shanghai. If I find it advisable and practicable I wish to go up the Yangtsze as high as Hankow, the great central emporium of China. This is the city highest up the river to be opened to foreign commerce. If Admiral Sir James Hope succeeds in opening the river to trade it is important that our flag should be shown, that the inhabitants on the banks of the river should see that we have a Naval force for the protection of our ships and countrymen who may engage in trade at the cities to be opened to commerce. . . ."

Another letter from the same to Commander Radford, dated "U. S. Flagship Hartford, Hong Kong, March 29th, 1861," says:

"I have received your several letters. . . . I find nothing in them to make me change my plans. Having received a copy of the ' Notification ' of the opening of the Yangtsze to *British* trade, I feel bound to hasten my departure, and hope to be in Shanghai by the 15th of April, and as soon thereafter as I can make the necessary preparations, to go up the Yangtsze to make arrangements with the insurgent Chiefs to permit our ships and countrymen to pass up and down the river.

"I wish you to obtain all the information you can, and charts of any part of the river, *particularly* shoal places, and if you can find any one well acquainted with the navigation of the river, try to secure his services.

"We shall require for the different vessels about four hundred tons of coal; if there is not that quantity on hand it must be purchased. I have written you a separate letter on this subject. . . ."

The coal for this journey was obtained from the important commercial house of Olyphant & Co., in Shanghai, one of the members of which firm was, at that time, Mr. Ethan Allan Hitchcock, later U. S. Ambassador to Russia, and still later U. S. Secretary of the Interior. When in Petrograd Mr. Hitchcock himself told me of his having accompanied Commander Radford, as his guest on the *Dacotah*, upon that trip up the Yangtsze Kiang, in the course of which the first commercial relations were established between the United States and the cities bordering China's great inland waterway.

While speaking of Mr. Hitchcock I trust I may be pardoned a digression. Vividly do I recall certain words of his of which it may not be amiss to remind the world today. I was calling one afternoon during the winter of 1898, at the American Embassy in St. Petersburg. It was just after the time when the ill-fated Emperor Nicholas II had startled the world by proposing the

settlement of international difficulties by arbitration, and in the course of conversation the Ambassador, Mr. Hitchcock, said to me: "If the Emperor Nicholas never does another thing in all his life, this *one thing* he has now done will go down to posterity to the imperishable honor of his name."

"The evil that men do, lives after them;  
The good is oft interred with their bones."

"The Yang-tsze Kiang rises in the Minn Mountains of Thibet, and after a course of 2,900 miles empties itself into the Yellow Sea in about 31° lat. It enters the Chinese province of Yun-nan at the Hwang-shing Pass, or Pass of Imperial Victory. It then turns northward into the province of Szechuen, and thence eastward to the boundary of Hoo-nan in the neighborhood of the Tung-ting Lake, the waters of which contribute largely to swell its volume. From this point it makes a curve northward as far as Han-kow, receiving on its way the waters of the Han River. From Han-kow it bends its course southward to the Po-yang Lake. Thence it proceeds in a northeasterly direction until it reaches Nanking, 200 miles from the sea. Here the influence of the tide begins to be felt, and beyond this point it gradually widens into the great estuary by which it is connected with the ocean."

Commodore Stribling's report shows that the three ships, *Hartford*, *Dacotah*, and *Saginaw* left Shanghai on April 30th for their journey up the Yangtsze, two months after Admiral Sir James Hope had gone over the same route. In their passage up the river they stopped at all the ports already open to trade by the British.

Captain Blackiston, in his account of the Hope Expedition, says that the country bordering the Yangtsze near its mouth is low,



and that but little high land is to be seen until nearing Chin-Kiang, 155 nautical miles from Shanghai. It was at this place that Commodore Stribling first brought his little fleet to anchor. They next visited Nanking, near which were the ruins of the Ming tombs. The country about here was well stocked with game, and in the reed beds under the walls of Nanking pheasants were so closely packed that,—as Captain Blackiston expresses it,—“I doubt as to whether any covert in England could have exhibited such an abundance.”

If such conditions prevailed at the time of the passage of the *Dacotah* it is safe to assume that the Ming tombs, or any other historical sights bordering the river, received but scant attention from that vessel's commander!

One hundred miles above Nanking, approximately sixteen miles beyond the city of Anking, Commodore Stribling left the flagship *Hartford*, and continued his way up the river with the *Dacotah* and *Saginaw*. “There is sufficient depth of water in the river for the *Hartford*,” reads the report, “but there are some interior places into which I did not think it proper to run the risk of getting so heavy a ship.”

Soon after passing Yang-Lo the two ships came to anchor off Hankow, where the immense number of river junks and the fleet of white sails seen, as one looked up the main river, proved the great commercial value of the port.

“Hankow, the great depot of which so much has been said, extends for about a mile from the junction of the two rivers, down the left bank of the Yangtsze and up that of the Han” . . . the latter, which is considered the safer anchorage, is crowded with craft of all kind. The banks in March are eighteen to twenty feet high, and many houses are built out on piles driven into the steep sides of the Han. From July to September or October the whole of the neighboring country is under water,

and within about a mile of the town the waters remain so long that the soil is not under regular cultivation.

Hankow derives its importance from its trade, and there is no idle population. It is 588 geographical or 676 statute miles distant from Shanghai.

Here the *Dacotah* remained while Commodore Stribling proceeded in the *Saginaw* alone to Yochau, on the Tung Ting Lake, going about 150 miles above Hankow, making a distance all told of more than 700 miles from the mouth of the river.

An incident related by my father as having occurred during that journey probably took place while the *Dacotah* lay then at Hankow. A coolie, working on a barge alongside the ship, had one of his legs caught and crushed between the two. Hearing that it had been necessary to amputate the injured member, the officers of the ship promptly made up a purse of fifty dollars and sent it to the man. On the morning following the presentation, the river bank was literally lined with Chinamen all eagerly offering to have a leg amputated at the same rate of payment.

In his report of this journey to the Secretary of the Navy, the Hon. Gideon Welles, Commodore Stribling writes: "The Yangtze is singularly exempt from difficulties, and with the exception of a place called 'Lang Shan Crossing' (the bugbear of Yangtze navigation) almost any one acquainted with the navigation of our Western rivers would find no difficulty in going up and down. . . . The display of our flag here on board a national vessel for the first time is worthy of being noted. The presence of our three steamers on the river at the same time, I think has been of great service to our countrymen residing on shore. I am happy to inform you of the continued good health of the officers and crews of the different vessels of the squadron. . . ."

This journey occupied but one month short of two days. Reaching Shanghai on May 28th, Commander Radford was im-

mediately ordered to proceed to Swatow to obtain satisfaction for the injustice done to Messrs. Bradley & Co., American merchants of that place, whose establishment had been looted by native brigands and goods valued at approximately \$10,000 stolen.

Commander Radford's orders were to "use prompt and decided measures in obtaining indemnity for the losses of Messrs. Bradley & Co."

For over a month had the distraught U. S. Consul, Mr. Wm. Breck, been appealing for aid to the Chinese officials in this case, and finally, on June 6th, he was able to demand "the immediate delivery to me on board the U. S. Steam Sloop *Dacotah*, now lying at Swatow, of all the property belonging to Messrs. Bradley & Co. which has been recovered, and for the balance not yet recovered full payment in money."

The presence of the *Dacotah* and the *John Adams*, Commander J. M. Berrien, at Swatow, proved an effective argument, and the property was promptly paid for in full.

From Swatow Commander Radford proceeded to Hong Kong, and a letter received there by him from Mr. Breck, closes with the words:

"Please, Sir, accept of my thanks and kind wishes, and trusting you have quite recovered from the effects of your fall,

"Believe me, Sir, etc., etc.,

"William Breck."

That Commander Radford had had a somewhat serious accident about that time is shown by several questioning letters, and the following from Commodore Stribling contains, in addition to friendly inquiries, the dread news that the clouds which had been gathering upon the political horizon had now burst in fullest fury.

"Hartford, Shanghai,  
"June 13th, 1861.

"My dear Sir,

"I regret to have heard of your accident, or rather, I regret the accident. I trust it was only a momentary shock, and that you are now as well as usual.

"I suppose you found the *John Adams* at Swatow, and hope with such an *imposing* force, you have settled all the difficulties to your satisfaction. I do not expect residents or Consuls to be satisfied with anything less than to go to the same lengths as the French and English, which we cannot do.

"If you can, I should like you to be at Hong Kong as soon as the *John Adams*.

"News from home very bad. Civil war I fear has commenced. God only knows when or how it will end. All we can do is to do our duty and wait events.

"Yours truly,

"C. K. Stribling."

"Commander Wm. Radford."

On July 10th, 1861, Commodore Stribling wrote from Hong Kong to the Hon. Gideon Welles as follows: "I enclose a copy of a General Order which, under existing circumstances, I considered it proper to address to those under my command; where there is so much defection and such loose views of allegiance to the United States I considered it my duty to express myself as I have done in my General Order.

"I take this occasion to express my entire confidence in the fidelity of the Commanders of the different vessels composing the Squadron under my command, and I think it may be said the vessels they command will be true to the Flag of the Union.





COMMANDER WILLIAM RADFORD

From a Daguerreotype Made Before Sailing in the  
*Dacotah* for China, in 1860



There are however several of the Lieutenants and other officers from the seceding States who would resign if they could be permitted to return home at once. I have informed such that I would forward their resignations, but that they could not leave until informed of their acceptance by the Dept. None have tendered their resignations under this condition.

“ Resp’ty,

“ C. K. Stribling.”

The “ General Order ” here referred to states in part:

“ By the last mail we have authentic accounts of the commencement of Civil War in the United States by the attack and capture of Fort Sumter by the forces of the Confederate States.

“ It is not my purpose to discuss the merits of the cause, or causes, which has resulted in plunging our Country into all the horrors of Civil War, but to remind those under my command of their obligations now to a faithful and zealous performance of every duty. Coming as we do from the various sections of the Country, unanimity of opinion cannot be expected upon this subject, and I would urge upon all the necessity of abstaining from all angry and inflammatory language upon the cause of the present state of things in the United States, and to recollect that here we have nothing to do but perform the duty of our respective stations, and to obey the orders of our Superiors in authority; to this we are bound by the solemn obligations of our oath.

“ I charge all commanders and other officers to show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination and to be vigilant in inspecting the conduct of all such as are placed under their command.

“ The Honor of the Nation, of the Flag under which many of us have served from boyhood, our own honor and good name,

require now, if ever, that we suffer no blot upon the character of our country while the Flag of the Union is in our keeping.

“C. K. Stribling,

“Flag Officer.”

“Commander W. Radford, etc.”

There was not, however, an instant's hesitation on the part of Commander Radford, who, firm and unyielding in his allegiance to the National Cause—although his course placed him in direct antagonism to many members of his own family and to numbers of his closest friends—remained true to his country's flag, and “by his example”—as was said of him in later years by Admiral Dewey—“prevented many defections amongst the officers serving under his command.”

Despite the loyalty of their sentiments, both Commodore Stribling and Commander Radford were recalled, and ordered to return home via Egypt, France and England, while Captains Engle and McKinstry were sent out to relieve them.

The following letter from an American resident of Hong Kong explains itself.

“Hong Kong, July 25th, 1861.

“My dear Capt'n Radford,

“The enclosed has been sent to me to hand to you and is a true copy of the original letter handed to Commodore Stribling. Had there been time before your departure for the U. States, the signatures of all the Americans in China would have been affixed to the original letter. As it is, it bears the names of all the Americans residing in Hong Kong and they represent in a great measure those who reside at the other ports.

“I need not say that I am most happy to endorse this copy to you, and to bear testimony to the pleasure it has afforded the



community to thus express their regard and esteem for the Commodore and yourself.

"Yours very truly,

"W. W. Parker."

(The testimonial here referred to is missing from my father's papers.)

To a letter from the officers of the *Dacotah* the following reply was written:

"Hong Kong, China,

"July 27th, 1861.

"Gentlemen,

"Your kind and warm hearted letter is before me. I thank you for this evidence of your regard. I trust I need not assure you that I shall not soon forget the time we have spent together on the *Dacotah* and the happy relations existing between us.

"With my most cordial wishes for your future happiness and prosperity,

"I am, Very faithfully your Friend,

"Wm. Radford."

"To the Officers

"of the U. S. S. *Dacotah*, Hong Kong."

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE "CUMBERLAND"

At the outbreak of the Civil War the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Gideon Welles, found himself surrounded by officers many of whom, although of doubtful loyalty, yet continued to hold their positions in order to hamper the government and betray its secrets.

A short time before Fort Sumter was fired upon, the Commandant of the Washington Navy Yard gave a large party at his quarters on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter, to which the President and his cabinet were invited. The house was festooned everywhere with the American flag; yet just after Sumter was fired on, the Commandant, Captain Buchanan, with most of those under his command, including his new son-in-law, resigned their commissions and left the Washington Navy Yard to take care of itself.

At that very time the secession of Virginia had been resolved upon, which was known to these disloyal officers, although not to the government, for the action of the Secessionists had been delayed and kept secret, in order to enable the conspirators to seize the public property at Norfolk and elsewhere.

Everything possible to ensure the falling of the Norfolk Navy Yard into the hands of the Secessionists had been prepared for that event.

The Secretary of the Navy, finding himself unable to cope with the difficulties of the situation, summoned to the Navy Department Commodore Hiram Paulding, a loyal officer, who was now

declining in years. Commodore Paulding broke up the conclave which was in the habit of meeting in the Bureau of Ordnance, for he felt that these officers were inimical to the government, and he recommended the Secretary of the Navy to change the suspected Chief of Bureau for another known to be loyal.

Frequent accounts reached Washington of the hostile attitude of the people in Norfolk and Portsmouth towards the government, and their determination that the Navy Department should not remove a ship or a gun from the station.

Early in April the Navy Department began to get uneasy for the safety of the Navy Yard, where lay the steam frigate *Merrimac*, of 40 guns; the sloops-of-war *Germantown* and *Plymouth*, each of 22 guns; and the brig *Dolphin*, of 4 guns; beside several old ships which had been associated with the history of the Navy and were dear to the country. These were the *Pennsylvania*, *United States*, *Columbus*, *Delaware*, *Raritan*, and *Columbia*. The sloop-of-war *Cumberland* was also moored at the Navy Yard. These vessels were valued at about two millions of dollars.

The Department was most anxious to get the *Merrimac* away from the Yard to a place of safety, but was informed by the Commandant, Commodore McCauley, that it would take a month to put her machinery in working order. Indecision seemed to exist everywhere, and some of the best officers in the Navy were apparently quite dazed at the course which events were taking. Commodore McCauley, who had fought gallantly for his country in former days, was completely acquitted of anything like disloyalty, but with promptness and decision he might have saved all the ships, guns, and stores, even if he had judged it advisable to abandon the Navy Yard.

In what appeared a veritable fit of panic the Norfolk Navy Yard was abandoned and the buildings set fire to on April 21st, 1861. The destruction took place after the arrival from Wash-

ington of the *Pawnee*, of 15 guns, under Commodore Paulding, who had been instructed "to save what he could and act as he thought proper."

It must have been a painful alternative to that faithful old officer, who abhorred everything in the shape of rebellion, to be obliged to apply the torch to the historic ships of the Navy, and destroy other valuable government property, especially since he was aware that most of the destruction might have been prevented, had not so many days been lost in deciding what to do.

All the ships, except the *Cumberland*, were well filled with combustibles, and the whole saturated with oil and turpentine. The shiphouses and other buildings were prepared in the same manner, and nothing left to chance; the rebels could derive no benefit from what was left behind.

At 2.30 A.M., April 21st, a rocket from the *Pawnee* gave the signal; the work of destruction commenced with the *Merrimac*, and in ten minutes she was one vast sheet of flame. In quick succession the trains to the other ships and buildings were ignited and the surrounding country brilliantly illuminated.

The *Cumberland* had been towed out of reach of the fire by the *Pawnee*; and the *Merrimac*, though burned to the water's edge and sunk, was afterwards raised and converted into the powerful ironclad which was to wreak such havoc in Hampton Roads and carry consternation throughout the North.

"When the Union naval officers set fire to the buildings of the Norfolk Navy Yard," writes Admiral Porter, in his "Naval History of the Civil War," "they supposed they had taken such precautions that everything of value would be destroyed, but as soon as the Federals had departed a detachment of Virginia volunteers rushed in to extinguish the flames. The *Merrimac* had been sunk, but the lower part of her hull and her engines and boilers were substantially uninjured.



" Lieut. John M. Brooke, one of the most accomplished officers among those who had left our Navy and joined the Confederate cause, visited the scene of the conflagration, and it at once occurred to him that the *Merrimac* could be rebuilt as an iron-clad; and his plans being accepted by Mr. Mallory, the Secretary of the Confederate Navy, orders were issued to have them carried out at once.

" The vessel was raised and cut down to the old berth deck, both ends for a distance of seventy feet were covered over, and when the ship was in fighting trim were just awash. On the midship section, a length of one hundred and seventy feet was built over, the sides being at an angle of fifty-five degrees, a roof of oak and pitch pine extending from the water-line to a height of seven feet above the gun-deck. Both ends of this structure were rounded, so that the pivot guns could be used as bow and stern chasers. . . .

" The wood backing was covered with iron plates rolled at the Tredegar works in Richmond. These plates were eight inches wide and two inches thick. The first covering was put on horizontally, the second up and down, making a total thickness of iron of four inches strongly bolted to the woodwork and clinched inside.

" The ram, or prow, was of cast-iron, projecting four feet, and, as was found subsequently, was badly secured. The rudder and propeller were entirely unprotected. The pilot-house was forward of the smokestack and covered with the same thickness of iron as the sides.

The motive power was the same as had been in the ship before; both boilers and engines were very defective, and the vessel was not capable of making more than five knots an hour."

Another able officer, also formerly of the United States Navy, Lieut. Catesby ap R. Jones, had charge of the preparation of the

*Merrimac's* armament, and to his skill was due the efficiency of her battery. It consisted of two seven-inch rifles, reinforced with three-inch steel bands shrunk around the breech; these were the bow and stern pivots. There were in broadside two six-inch rifles similar to the above, and six nine-inch smooth-bores—in all ten heavy guns.

This formidable vessel was placed under the command of Flag Officer Franklin Buchanan, who had resigned from the United States Navy, where he had reaped the highest rewards that could be bestowed in time of peace. He was surrounded with excellent officers, and no commander was ever better seconded by his subordinates.

The officers of this historic vessel were as follows: Lieutenants: Catesby ap R. Jones (Executive and Ordnance officer), Charles C. Simms, Robert D. Minor (Flag), Hunter Davidson, John Taylor Wood, J. R. Eggleston, Walter Butt; Midshipmen, Fonte, Marmaduke, Littlepage, Craig, Long, and Rootes; Paymaster, Semple; Surgeon, Phillips; Assistant Surgeon, Algernon S. Garnett; Captain of Marines, Reuben Thorn, etc., etc.

Thus equipped, officered and manned, the ironclad represented at the moment the most powerful fighting ship in the world, and the Federal government might well feel uneasy at the tidings they received of this monster which threatened to carry destruction all along the northern coast.

The Navy Department, in the meanwhile, had contracted for iron-clad vessels, but two of them were far behind time in building; and the other was a "little nondescript" in which no one had any confidence, with the exception alone of Commodore Joseph Smith.

On learning, however, that the *Merrimac* was further advanced than they had supposed, the Department hurried work on Ericsson's *Monitor*, of which the prediction had been made that "she

would sink as soon as she was launched." No sooner was the *Monitor* launched and equipped than Lieut. John L. Worden, who had been assigned to her command, started, without a trial trip, for Hampton Roads.

In the meantime the *Merrimac*, which the Confederates had re-christened the *Virginia*, was all ready to leave the Norfolk Navy Yard on what was said to be her trial trip, but which Commander Buchanan had determined to make a day of triumph for the Confederate Navy.

During those days of intense excitement my mother, who was with her parents and children in Morristown, was enduring every phase of mental agony. Not that she for an instant ever doubted my father's loyalty to his government, but she feared lest the fact of his being a Southerner would militate against him with the authorities in Washington. In her distress and anxiety she wrote to Commodore Du Pont, who, in his answer, gives a graphic picture of the difficulties with which the Secretary of the Navy had then to contend.

"Navy Dept. Washington, 3rd Aug./61.

"My dear Mrs. Radford,

"Your letter has been forwarded to me here, where I am on temporary duty, and I take pleasure in replying the first moment I can command.

"I will in the first place give you the facts in relation to your husband, & then will offer you as a sincere friend of his a few suggestions in reference thereto.

"The Dept. has sent a Commander out to relieve him & he has been ordered to return home by the overland route and report to the Navy Dept. Commander McKinstry is the officer who has gone out—he went with Com. Engle—the date I do not remember—the length of the voyage by the above route if the

connection is made at various points is sixty days & returning about the same.

“Commodore Stribling is to be relieved under the same cabinet decision by Capt. Engle. At the time these orders were given the defection from the Army & Navy had reached its height & the circumstances attending many of the resignations were most startling. Officers within forty-eight hours of the time of their retirement, when the Capital was *in peril*, had declared their last drop of blood would be shed for the Union. Appeals were made in the Southern papers to the Southern officers to run into the Seceded ports their Commands & they were publicly invited to do so by one of the resigned officers.

“The subject became a reason of *State* & an act of administration, wholly irrespective of individuals & was applied to all the Stations. Not a word was ever overheard against your husband that I can learn. On the contrary the greatest faith was felt in his loyalty—but the Dep’t acted on principle, that no risk should be run of losing any of our ships.

“These things, my dear Madam, are the stern incidents of War, & particularly Civil War; I ought to add, that the Dept. is prepared to make the most complete *amende* to any loyal officer who will return under these circumstances. Your husband will be immediately reintegrated in a command the moment he desires it.

“Please say to him from *me*, that if I myself, coming from a slave state, had been relieved as he has been that I would entirely acquiesce in the act of the Government under the circumstances; for the course of the Army & Navy was such in its treachery and desertion that it (the Govmt.) was perfectly authorized to adopt such measures as it might deem best to save its property, if it could not save its officers.

“I know at first this intelligence must be unpleasant to you and



to him, but the more your husband ponders on it, the more I am sure his good sense & calm judgment, for which he has always been noted, will prevail, and prevent any hasty action on his part.

"I am sorry you should have thought any apology necessary for troubling me, & I shall only be gratified if I can be of any further service now or when Capt. Radford returns. You will see from the foregoing that Yr. presence here is not at all necessary.

"With great respect,

"I am, My dear Mrs. Radford,

"Yrs. truly,

"S. F. Du Pont."

"Mrs. M. L. Radford,

"Morristown."

It is unnecessary to state that my father's arrival in Morristown was hailed with the utmost delight by all the family, and we children—there were then four of us—could not be persuaded to give him a moment's peace. Despite the fact of his feeling ill, and pleading intense headache, there was, I think, hardly an instant during the entire day of his homecoming that one of us, at least, was not seated upon his knees with our arms about his neck. My mother's consternation may be therefore readily imagined when, that night, upon summoning the family physician, he pronounced my father to be seriously ill with smallpox. It proved in reality to be a severe form of varioloid, contracted through having occupied a cabin on the transatlantic steamer in which, on the previous crossing, a passenger had died of the disease. The laws of hygiene and sanitation had not then been developed to the point of saving people from such dire hazards.

However, though gravely ill for a few days, my father recovered rapidly, and no other case of the disease developed in the family.

Having reported his arrival by letter to Secretary Gideon Welles on October 12th, 1861, Captain Radford received orders on October 30th, appointing him Inspector of the 3rd Lighthouse District at New York.

The ensuing letter to the Secretary of the Navy shows that the manner of his recall from China still rankled in his breast.

“Morristown, N. J.,

“Dec. 3rd, 1861.

“Sir;

“Having been relieved from the Command of the U. S. Sloop-of-War *Dacotah*, of East India Squadron, and having had a personal interview with the Hon. Secretary of the Navy in which he was pleased to express his confidence in my loyalty—which no person who knows me has ever doubted—I would most respectfully request that his belief of my loyalty should be sent me in writing, and also his assurance that no act of mine caused the Hon. Secretary to deprive me of my command.

“Very respectfully, Your obdt. Servt.,

“William Radford,

“Comdr. U. S. Navy.”

“Hon. Gideon Welles.”

The reply to this was as follows:

“Navy Department,

“Dec. 7th, 1861.

“Sir,

“The assurance given by yourself and also by your late Flag Officer of your loyalty to the Union and the Flag gave me, as I said to you in our interview, sincere gratification. Indeed I had no reason to doubt your fidelity from any act or expression of

your own, but under extraordinary circumstances I felt impelled from abundant precaution to do an act that was harsh and severe towards yourself and others. It gives me far greater pleasure to learn that I was in error than it could have done to have had my apprehensions confirmed, and it is due to you to say that no act of yours caused me to relieve you of your command.

"I am, resptly yr, obdt. Svt.,

"Gideon Welles."

"Commander William Radford,  
"U. S. Navy."

On February 8th, 1862, Commander Radford was detached from duty as Light House Inspector—a duty which at that time could hardly have been to his liking—and ordered to proceed to Hampton Roads, Va., without delay, and report to Flag Officer Goldsborough, or the senior officer present, for the command of the U. S. Sloop-of-War *Cumberland*.

This order must have brought joy and gladness to his heart, affording him, as it appeared, an opportunity of proving, by the faithful fulfillment of his duty, his unswerving loyalty to his country's flag. Never were hopes doomed to more tragic deception.

Proceeding immediately to Hampton Roads Commander Radford reported as directed and had been in command of the *Cumberland* but three weeks when he received the following order from Secretary Welles:

"Navy Department, March 1st, 1862.

"Sir,

"A Naval Court of Inquiry of which you are appointed a Member is ordered to convene on board the U. S. Steamer *Roanoke* in Hampton Roads, Va., on the third day of March, inst.

at which time and place you will appear and report yourself to the presiding officer of the Court.

"I am respectfully yours,

"Gideon Welles."

"To

"Commander Wm. Radford, U. S. Navy,

"Comdg. U. S. S. *Cumberland*,

"Hampton Roads, Va."

At that time there was at anchor in Hampton Roads, off Fortress Monroe, the *Minnesota*, of 40 guns, Captain Van Brunt; *Roanoke*, of 40 guns, Captain Marston; *St. Lawrence*, 50 guns, Captain Purviance; and several army transports. Seven miles above, off Newport News, lay the *Congress*, 50 guns; and the *Cumberland*, 30.

It was the 8th of March, and the Court of Inquiry on board the U. S. S. *Roanoke* was in the fifth day of its session. The weather was beautiful, following a storm. The water was smooth and the vessels in the Roads swung lazily at their anchors. Boats hung to the swinging booms; washed clothes on the lines; nothing indicated the approach of an enemy, nor had any one apparently the slightest idea that the Confederate ram *Merrimac* was as yet ready for service. Little did Commander Radford dream of any danger then threatening his ship.

At 12.45 P.M. "three small steamers" were reported coming around Sewell's Point, one of which was immediately recognized by her large smokestack as the *Merrimac*. Great excitement immediately prevailed. Signal was made to the *Minnesota* to slip her cables, get under way and pursue the enemy; but when within a mile and a half of Newport News the frigate grounded and remained fast during the events which took place that day and the one following.



The *Merrimac* stood straight for the *Congress* and *Cumberland*, and when she was within three-quarters of a mile the latter vessel opened on her with heavy pivot guns. Paymaster McKean Buchanan, a brother of the Confederate commander, was an officer of the *Congress*, and the *Merrimac*, passing that vessel, steered direct for the *Cumberland*, the Confederate Flag Officer hoping that the *Congress* would surrender on seeing the fate of her consort, and that his brother would thus escape. In passing the *Congress* the Confederate ram delivered her starboard broadside, which was quickly returned, and a rapid fire from both vessels were maintained on the ironclad. Steering direct for the *Cumberland*, the *Merrimac* struck her at right angles, under the fore-channels on the starboard side, and the blow, though hardly perceptible on board the ironclad, seemed to those on board the *Cumberland* as though the whole ship's side had been smashed in.

Backing out, the *Merrimac* put her helm hard-a-starboard, and turned slowly, while the two Union ships poured into her a continual fire, which apparently fell harmlessly on her iron plating. On the other hand, as the ironclad swung round from the *Cumberland*, the *Congress* lay with her stern to the enemy, which raked her three times, fore and aft. In fact, the *Congress* was a mere target for the *Merrimac's* shot and shell, with little danger of the latter being injured in return.

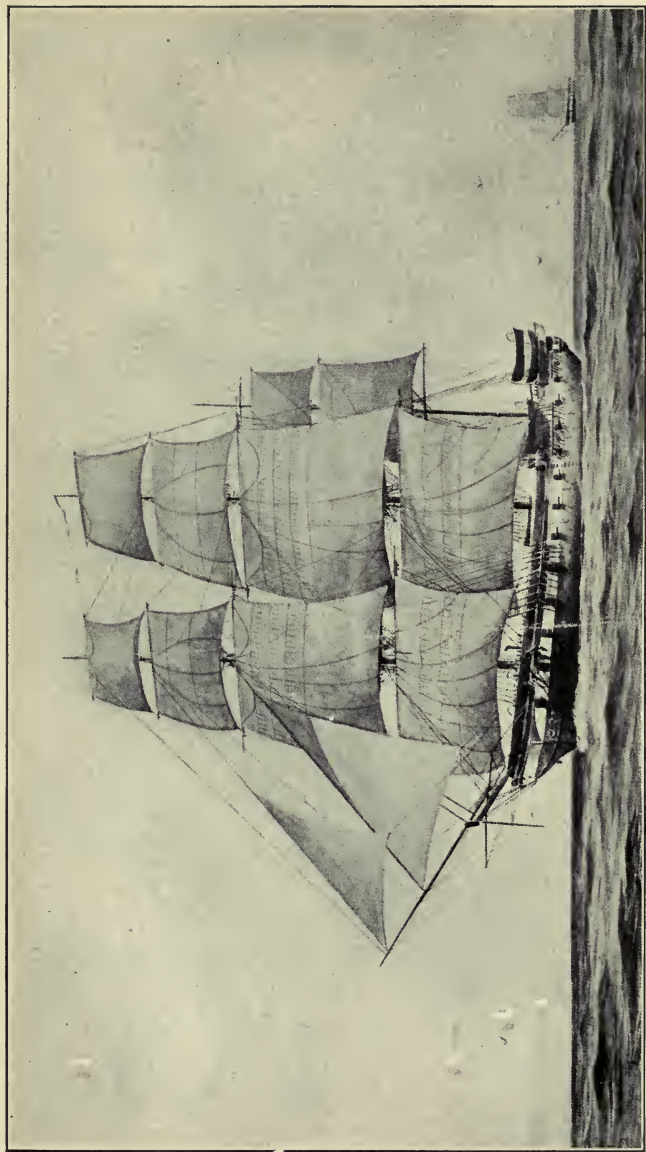
In the meantime the *Cumberland* was settling in the water from the effects of the great opening in her side, and although it was evident to all on board that the day was lost, and that the ship must inevitably go to the bottom, those brave fellows kept up a rapid fire until driven by the water from the lower deck guns, when they retreated to the upper deck and continued to fight the pivot guns till the *Cumberland* went down with her colors still flying. There being no great depth of water in that spot several

feet of the topmast remained above the waves, and the flag of the Union still floated bravely in the air.

An interesting bit of history concerning that flag was told me recently by Rear Admiral T. O. Selfridge, who, during the battle, was second in command on the *Cumberland*. His words were approximately as follows: "You know," he said, "we were fighting up to the last moment; even firing a broadside after the ship had commenced to go down, so that the men had all simply to jump for their lives. I, myself, jumped from a porthole on the gun-deck. Under such conditions it was of course impossible to save the wounded, and even today the cries of those poor fellows who were unable to move as the water rushed in, ring in my ears. The ship was not far from shore, and the boats had all been lowered immediately, when the action began. Swimming to a boat that was lying astern, and was already well crowded, I got in and so reached the shore. All the boats were well loaded, but numbers swam ashore. The ship settled very quickly, and when we landed and saw the flag still flying at the masthead I called for volunteers to go out with me to rescue it. A number of men sprang forward—we were of course all dripping wet, and many were but half clad—and taking a small boat we started for the spot where the *Cumberland* had disappeared. The enemy fired at us from a distance, but the shot pretty much all fell short or missed us, and so we got the flag, and prevented its falling into the hands of the *Merrimac's* crew."

This incident, so far as I am aware, has never been written of before.

Rear Admiral Selfridge, was a son of Rear Admiral Thomas Oliver Selfridge, who was born in Boston, Mass., April 24th, 1804, and entered the Navy as midshipman March 3rd, 1827. Served in the West Indies, Brazil and Mediterranean. Commissioned Commander 11th April, 1844; assigned to ship



*U. S. S. Cumberland*





*Columbus*, flagship of East India Squadron, in 1845-46, and subsequently of the Pacific Squadron during the Mexican War, 1846-47. In May, 1847, he was transferred to the sloop *Dale*, in which he participated in the capture of Mazatlan and Guaymas. At the latter place he received a severe wound, in consequence of which he was obliged to relinquish the command of the *Dale*, and returned home in June, 1848. After a leave he was on duty at the Boston Navy Yard until 1861, when he had command of the steam frigate *Mississippi* in the Gulf Squadron for a few months. His wound incapacitated him for sea service, and he had charge of the Navy Yard at Mare Island, Cal. from 1862-65. He was retired April 24th, 1866, and promoted to Rear Admiral July 25th, 1866. He died in October, 1903, aged 97 years; upon which occasion the British Naval flags were placed at half mast, because of his being the oldest admiral in the world.

His son, also Thomas Oliver, was born in Charlestown, Mass., February 6th, 1837; graduated at the U. S. Naval Academy at the head of his class in 1854. Promoted to Lieutenant February 15th, 1860. Was second in command of the *Cumberland* during her fight with the *Merrimac*. Was afterwards appointed flag-lieutenant of the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron. Commissioned Lieutenant-Commander July 16th, 1862, and commanded the ironclad steamer *Cairo*, which was blown up by a torpedo in the Yazoo River near Vicksburg. He commanded the ironclad *Osage* in the Red River expedition, during which he inflicted a loss of 400 killed and wounded on the Confederates at Blair's plantation. He had charge of the steamer *Huron* in both attacks on Fort Fisher, and commanded the third division of the landing party of sailors that stormed the fort. In 1869 he took charge of surveys for an interoceanic canal across the isthmus of Darien, and on December 31st of that year was promoted to Commander. In 1870 he surveyed the San Blas route, and still other routes

during the years 1871-73. He was a member of the international Congress at Paris on the subject of the Canal in 1876.

Commanded the steamer *Enterprise*, North Atlantic station in 1877-80, during which cruise he surveyed the Amazon River. Commissioned Captain February 24th, 1881, and in January took charge of the torpedo station at Newport, R. I., where he remained until 1885. During his service at the torpedo station he invented a device to protect a ship by suspending torpedoes to a net by which an attacking torpedo would be destroyed. He was made Commodore in 1894; Rear Admiral in 1897, and was retired February, 1898.

The following is the list of the officers and petty-officers of the *Cumberland*, as given in my father's own handwriting:

"Comdr. Wm. Radford; Lieuts. Geo. U. Morris, Thos. O. Selfridge; Master, M. S. Stuyvesant; Act. Masters, Wm. P. Randall, Wm. W. Kennison; Lieutenant Marines, Charles Hayward; Pilot, Lewis Smith; Surgeon, Chas. M. Martin; Asst. Surgeon, Edward Kershner; Boatswain, Edward R. Bell; Gunner, Eugene Mack; Carpenter, W. M. Leighton; Sailmaker, David Bruce; Masters Mates, Henry Wyman, E. V. Tyson, Chas. S. O'Neil; Paymaster's Clerk, Hugh Nott; Capt. Clerk,—Ketchum.

"Chaplain, John L. Lenhart. (Drowned.)

"John M. Harrington, Master's Mate—killed."

Of what befell the commander of the *Cumberland* during these awful moments his own report to the Secretary of the Navy will tell. It is dated "Fort Monroe, Va., March 10th, 1862." and reads:

"It is my painful duty to have to report the loss of the U. S. Ship *Cumberland*, under my command, on the 8th inst., at Newport News, Va.

"I was on board the U. S. Frigate *Roanoke*, by order of the Hon. Secretary of the Navy, as member of a Court of Inquiry,

when the *Merrimac* came out from Norfolk. I immediately procured a horse and proceeded with all despatch to Newport News," (the horse fell dead as he dismounted), "where I arrived only in time to see the *Cumberland* sink by being run into by the Rebel Ironclad Steamer *Merrimac*. Though I could not reach the *Cumberland* before the action was over I have the satisfaction of reporting that she was fought as long as her guns were above water. Every one on board must have done their duty nobly.

"I send with this the report of Lieut. George U. Morris, who was in command in my absence; also the Surgeon's report of the wounded saved." (By this we see that some, at least, of the wounded had been rescued.) "The loss was very heavy in killed, wounded and drowned; though the number cannot be ascertained accurately it is known to be over one hundred."

Later reports give the number of those either killed outright or drowned as 121, while of those saved a large portion were severely wounded.

"During the whole war," writes Admiral Porter, "there was no finer incident than this, and the bravery of the officers and men of the *Cumberland* even won the applause of the enemy."

In endorsing a petition some time later from a number of the men of the *Cumberland* for "honorable discharge," Commander Radford wrote to the Secretary of the Navy: "If any men ever deserved marked consideration from their country for gallant conduct, those men of the *Cumberland* do."

Amongst my father's papers I find a manuscript copy of a poem entitled "The Last Broadside," evidently written by some member of the crew, which, if not of a high order of poetry, still gives a vivid impression of the spirit that animated both officers and men of the *Cumberland*. It is headed, "Shall we give them

a broadside as she goes? ” which were the words spoken by Lieut. George Morris.

“ Shall we give them a broadside, my Boys, as she goes?  
Shall we send yet another to tell  
In iron-tongued words to Columbia's foes,  
How bravely her sons say “ Farewell ”?

“ Shall we give them a broadside once more, my brave men? ’  
‘ Aye! Aye! ’ rose the full, earnest cry.  
‘ A broadside! a broadside! we'll give them again!  
Then, *for God and the Right*, nobly die.’

“ ‘ Haste! Haste! ’ for amid all that battling din  
Comes a gurgling sound fraught with fear,  
As swift-flowing waters pour rushing in,  
Up! up! till her port-holes they near.

“ No blenching! no faltering! still fearless all seen;  
Each firm to his duty doth bide;  
A flash! and a broadside! a shout! a careen!  
And the *Cumberland* sinks 'neath the tide!

“ The *Star-Spangled Banner* still floating above,  
As a beacon upon the dark wave!  
Our Ensign of Glory, proud streaming in love,  
O'er the tomb of the *Loyal and Brave!* ”

George Upham Morris, son of Commodore Charles Morris, was born in Massachusetts, June 3rd, 1830. Commissioned Midshipman August 14th, 1846; Commander, July 25th, 1866. Distinguished himself by his defense of the *Cumberland* of which he was in temporary command, March 8th, 1862.

“ As her guns approached the water's edge,” said the Secretary of the Navy in his report for that year, “ her young Commander, Lieutenant Morris, and the gallant crew stood firm at their posts



and delivered a parting fire and the good ship went down heroically with her colors flying! "

Captain Morris died at Jordan Alum Springs, Va., August 15th, 1875.

The *Cumberland* was, however, not to go totally unavenged, as when, the following day, as soon as it was fairly light, the *Merrimac* got under way and headed toward the *Minnesota* as she lay hard and fast aground, the Confederates discovered a strange-looking craft by her side, which they knew at once to be Ericsson's *Monitor*, of which they had received a description from their spies in the North. The *Monitor* was but a pigmy in appearance alongside the lofty frigate she was guarding, and the enemy anticipated little difficulty in overcoming her. Still, her arrival was inopportune for the Confederates, causing a change in their plans, "which were to destroy the *Minnesota* and then the remainder of the squadron."<sup>1</sup>

As the *Merrimac* headed for the frigate *Minnesota*, Worden showed his confidence in the *Monitor* and her eleven-inch guns by steering directly for the Confederate ironclad. The latter opened fire from her forward guns upon what seemed more like a large floating buoy than a man-of-war, but not having a frigate's broad side to aim at the shot passed harmlessly over. The *Monitor's* answering guns were better aimed. The solid eleven-inch shots struck the *Merrimac* fairly, with a blow that resounded through the vessel. This was returned by a broadside from the *Merrimac*, but those shots that struck the *Monitor's* turret glanced harmlessly off.

More than two hours passed in this apparently unequal duel; the Confederates had made no impression on the *Monitor* and their own wounds were apparently slight, since the *Monitor* had not yet succeeded in penetrating the *Merrimac's* heavy armor.

<sup>1</sup> Confederate account.

Thousands of spectators with beating hearts watched the conflict from Fort Monroe, and from the ships. It seemed to them as though the battle would never end. At last the Confederate commander, thinking it useless to try his broadsides on the *Monitor* any longer, steered off towards the *Minnesota*, which opened on the *Merrimac* with all her broadside guns and the ten-inch pivot. The *Merrimac* returned the fire with her rifled bow gun, and a shell passed through the frigate, tearing four rooms into one, and exploding some charges of powder which set fire to the ship, but the flames were promptly extinguished. By the time the *Merrimac* had fired her third shell the little *Monitor* had come up with her again, and placed herself between the *Minnesota* and the enemy, compelling the latter to change her position. While doing this the *Merrimac* grounded, and the *Minnesota* poured into her the fire of all the guns she could bring to bear. As soon as the *Merrimac* got off the bottom she proceeded down the bay, then suddenly turned and attempted to run the *Monitor* down, but failing in the attempt she concentrated all her broadside guns on the little vessel, which was keeping up a rapid fire.

Suddenly the movements of the *Monitor* became erratic, and it was at this instant that Lieutenant Worden was disabled. He was looking through one of the slits in the pilot-house, when a shell exploded in front of the opening, driving the powder into his face and eyes, thus rendering him blind and helpless. He turned over the command of the vessel to the executive officer, Lieut. Samuel Dana Greene, who was in the turret, with instructions to continue the action, and the vessel was again headed toward the enemy.

For a short time after Lieutenant Worden was wounded, the *Monitor* was entirely under the control of the man at the wheel, who, having no one to direct him, and being doubtless excited by the fall of his commanding officer, steered off on another

course without any particular aim or object, and the commanding officer of the *Merrimac* took advantage of this circumstance to return to Norfolk. Professor Soley, in his work, "The Blockade and the Cruisers," says: "Seeing the *Monitor* draw off, Captain Van Brunt (of the *Minnesota*) under the supposition that his protector was disabled and had left him, prepared for the worst, and made ready to destroy his ship; but at this point the *Merrimac* withdrew to Norfolk. Greene fired at her twice, or at most three times. He then returned to the *Minnesota* and remained by her until she got afloat."

Thus ended this remarkable engagement, which, in the bravery and ability displayed on both sides, has never been excelled. It has been a mooted point as to the amount of damage the *Merrimac* received. The *Monitor*, we know, received none, except to her pilot-house, and could have fought all day without danger of vital injury to her hull or machinery, but the *Merrimac* was obliged to go into drydock to be very thoroughly repaired.

The outcome of the fight was a severe disappointment to the Confederates who had counted upon the capture of the whole Union fleet in the Roads, and an advance of the *Merrimac* upon Washington.

On the 9th of May following Norfolk was evacuated by the Confederates, the Navy Yard set on fire, and the batteries at Sewell's Point abandoned. That determined the fate of the *Merrimac*. Her occupation was gone, and to prevent her from falling into the hands of the Federal government, she was blown up and entirely destroyed.

"The experience we gained by the loss of the *Congress* and *Cumberland*," writes Admiral Porter, "was worth a dozen frigates, although we mourn the brave fellows who fell gloriously fighting for their country. Had there been no *Merrimac* we should never have built those magnificent ironclads, which for a time placed our

Navy in the front rank of the navies of the world, and enabled us to bid defiance to England and France, who were too much inclined to meddle with our affairs.

"The *Merrimac* taught our legislators the necessity of being more liberal in our naval expenditures, and to build armored vessels such as would not only be able to stand the heaviest seas, but to batter down the strongest forts, or destroy any enemy's vessel that came upon our coast.

"After the war was over the lesson was unfortunately soon forgotten, and in a few years the Navy, which was so powerful at the close of the rebellion, relapsed into an insignificance from which it will take long to recover; while other nations, taking advantage of our experience, have gone on building ironclads which astonish the world with their power."

On March 13th, 1862, Commander Radford writes as follows to the Hon. Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy:

"I have the honor to report my arrival at this place today (Morristown, N. J.), having had leave to come from Captain Marston, Senior Naval Officer at Hampton Roads.

"In less than a week I hope to be sufficiently recovered from my indisposition to take any service the Government may require of me,

"Very Respectfully,

"Your Obdt. Servt.,

"Wm. Radford, Comdr. U. S. Navy."

In a diary of my grandfather's of that time I find the following note concerning my father: "He lost everything in the way of clothing, stores and papers by this national misfortune, and returned home in deranged health from his exposure in trying to take care of his remaining crew, and in assisting also in the defense of Newport News from a land attack of the Rebel Army." To this



Mr. Lovell quaintly adds: "To his own great grief, and *to our joy*, he was absent on Court Martial duty at the time of the memorable encounter."

Unable to appreciate the cause of his great distress of mind, we children were simply wild with delight at our father's sudden, all unlooked-for, reappearance in our midst. He was at all times our preferred companion and playmate, and when, as often happened, my mother would reprove him for "spoiling the children," he would reply that it "took all his time when at home to get acquainted with his children, and that he had none left for punishments"; which, without doubt, we richly deserved.

This question of "getting acquainted," would frequently involve serious inroads on my grandmother's store of cookies or other dainties for our benefit; or, again, consist in raids upon my grandfather's apples, which were kept in great barrels in a carefully locked summer-house. But a broken lattice at a high angle made an opening through which it was but child's play for a seafaring man to pass while three or four "kiddies" would keep anxious watch outside lest any one should appear and detect *us* in these nefarious proceedings. Indeed I think those escapades entertained my father quite as much as they enchanted us, and it was small wonder that his presence at home was at all times eagerly looked for by his, I fear, frequently somewhat unruly offspring.

## CHAPTER XVII

### FITTING OUT SHIPS FOR THE U. S. GOVERNMENT

IN April, 1862, Commander Radford was appointed a member of a Naval Board ordered to convene at the Naval Academy, at Newport, R. I., on Monday, May 12th, under the Presidency of Commodore Stribling.

A letter written by Commander Radford to the Fourth Auditor, Hobart Berrian, on May 28th, 1862, reads:

"I should like to have my traveling accounts from Hong Kong, China, to the U. S. closed. All my papers were sunk in the *Cumberland* except the two principal receipts which are in your office.

"Commodore Stribling informs me his account was adjusted by allowing him nine hundred and thirty dollars. Mine must have been nearly the same, as we came by the same conveyance and at the same time. I received from the Government \$1,000.00

Expended 930.00

---

Due Govmt. \$70.00

"I hereby certify that I expended nine hundred and thirty dollars (or more) in traveling from Hong Kong, China, to the United States."

While still at Newport Commander Radford received, on May 27th, the following order:

"Upon the conclusion of your present duty you will proceed to New York, without delay, and report to Commodore Paulding

for temporary duty at the Navy Yard under his command.

"I am, etc., etc.,

"Gideon Welles."

This order is annotated,

"Reported June 10th, 1862,

"H. Paulding, Comdt."

Rear Admiral Hiram Paulding was born in Westchester County, New York, about the year 1800, and entered the Navy in September, 1811. His father was John Paulding, one of the captors of Major André. As a young midshipman during the second war with England, he saw some hard fighting with McDonough, in the battle on Lake Champlain, and so distinguished himself by his bravery that Congress voted him a sword.

In 1825 he made a cruise to the Pacific, notably to the Marquesas and neighboring islands; and afterwards published a book, entitled, "Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Pacific," in which he described the various islands he visited, and the customs of the inhabitants, etc., which were then new to the public.

In 1844 he was promoted to Captain. In 1857, Paulding figured in the famous filibustering expedition of Walker. The main body, commanded by Walker in person, landed at Punta Arenas, in the harbor of Greytown. Commodore Paulding, commanding the Home Squadron, arrived in the *Wabash* the next month, when Walker, with one hundred and thirty-two men, surrendered to him.

Commodore Paulding, though ranking as one of our ablest officers, was placed during the war, in command of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where he had to perform duties which, while bringing no especial renown, are yet as essential in time of war to the welfare of the nation as those which command the public eye.

Commander Radford's new duty proved, however, to be far from temporary, as he held the post for a period of two years less one month, during which time, as Executive Officer of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, he equipped and fitted out hundreds of vessels for the Navy. This was perhaps the most responsible and arduous service of his entire life.

Beside the many cares and responsibilities resting upon his shoulders was the added burden occasioned by the endeavors of certain evil disposed persons to convict him of being a Southern sympathizer by reason of the fact that he was the only member of his family serving with the Union forces; while innumerable relatives—among them his own brother John—had elected to cast in their lot with the Confederacy.

A rough draft of a letter shows, in part, some of the embarrassments with which he had then to contend. Although the name of the person to whom it was addressed is not given the contents would indicate that it was sent to Mr. E. Halsey, a distinguished lawyer and friend of the family in Morristown.

"Navy Yard, New York,  
"July 24th, 1862.

"I was in Morristown night before last to see a sick child of mine, and Mr. Lovell told me he had seen Mr. Hedley, who had asked him if he was not harboring Secessionists, Mrs. Kearny and daughter, in his house; moreover stating that Mrs. Kearny had visited my quarters in the Navy Yard, and insinuations were cast against me for having the said lady staying in my home.

"Mrs. Kearny is my sister, and the widow of Gen. S. W. Kearny, late of the U. S. Army, and one of the many distinguished



officers New Jersey has furnished to her country. She *was* in my home in the Yard. She has taken the oath of allegiance, and I have never heard or known of her making any remark against our Government. I am thus particular because it was insinuated by Mr. Hedley that she might give information to the rebels of what was doing in the Yard.

“Mrs. Kearny came to the East for the benefit of her daughter’s health. Her physician recommended the air of Morristown, and that is the reason she is there. I believe her to be a perfectly loyal woman, and if her husband—who was respected and esteemed by all who knew him—were alive he would ever be found battling to crush treason. One word for myself. My record with my Government would I hope show me incapable of a dishonorable act, and I was not aware I had left in Morristown an enemy who would so maliciously and unjustifiably attempt to stab me in the dark.

“I take the liberty of sending this to you, considering you one of our most distinguished townsmen and patriots, hoping if you hear my character assailed you will defend me when in the right. This much I hope and know you will do.

“Very truly, etc.,

“Wm. Radford.”

By an order of July 16th, 1862, Commander Radford was promoted to the grade of Captain.

The following is an extract from a letter written by Captain Radford to Senator Richardson on January 25th, 1863:

“Having seen by the papers that the promotion of Rear Admiral Paulding, whose name is before the Senate, has not passed, I take the liberty of enclosing a statement of his (which is known

to be correct) relative to his actions during the early part of the rebellion, and earnestly solicit any aid that may be in your power to give to effect the promotion of this truly meritorious and zealous officer, whose name has never been tarnished during a service of over half a century."

Among notes of my grandfather Lovell's, I find the following: "Navy Yard, Brooklyn, Jan. 29th, 1863, . . . Captain Radford has never been absent a single day from his office since he came here in *June* last . . . even Sundays up to one o'clock are given up to the pressing demands of Govmt. business."

Many a night did my father work in his office up to the "wee sma' hours" as well.

Again, in writing at that time to an intimate friend, Mr. Lovell says: "I am now surrounded by a most loving and affectionate family, the heads of which, my own honored son-in-law and his wife, my only daughter" (his only child as well) "being both found 'walking in the ordinance of the Lord blameless.'" Yet again of his son-in-law he writes that he "realizes his exemplary and perfect devotedness as a father and husband; while his brother officers all appreciate him as a gallant, loyal, and faithful officer."

Amongst the many ships that were at that time leaving the Brooklyn Navy Yard in quick succession to take their places in the fighting forces of the Union, was the double-ender, *Mackinaw*, launched on April 22nd, 1863, and christened by my sister, Mary Lovell Radford, then in her fourteenth year. Her attendants upon that occasion, both approximately of her own age, were Miss Emma Paulding, daughter of the Commandant of the Brooklyn Yard; and Miss Zeilin, whose father, Captain (later General) Zeilin, was then in command at the Marine Barracks.

The following invitation is among my father's papers:

" Sir,

" New York, October 19th, 1863.

" The honor of your company is requested on an Excursion to NIAGARA FALLS, in company with

" The Admiral and Officers of the Russian Fleet.

" The party will leave foot of Jay Street, on *Thursday Morning, 22d instant, at 8 o'clock*, by Steamer, for Albany; on Friday, at 8 A.M., by New York Central Railway, for Niagara.

" On Monday, a Train will leave Buffalo, (at an hour of which notice will be given,) passing through Portage, Elmira, &c., over the Erie Railway, to New York.

" We have the honor to enclose Tickets for these several conveyances. Should you be unable to go, we will thank you to return them to Mr. Sherman, No. 11 Nassau Street.

" Answer will oblige.

" We have the honor to be

" Your obedient servants,

" DANIEL DREW,

" For Hudson River Steamboat Company.

" WATTS SHERMAN,

" For New York Central Railway Company.

" J. C. BANCROFT DAVIS,

" For Erie Railway Company. "

" To Capt. Radford,

" U. S. Navy."

It is a well-known diplomatic " secret " that when the Emperor Nicholas I of Russia was approached by Napoleon III as to the expediency of recognizing the Confederacy, the former sovereign, by way of reply, immediately sent a powerful fleet, under sealed orders, to the United States. (Of this historical incident mention will be made later.)

The following interesting letter from Capt. (later Rear Ad-

miral) C. R. P. Rodgers, is dated "U. S. S. *Wabash*, Port Royal, 14th Aug." The year is not given, but the contents show it to have been written in the year 1862, during which Captain Rodgers was Fleet Captain of the South Atlantic Squadron, under command of Rear Admiral S. F. Du Pont.

"My dear Radford,

"I had hoped to see you when I was at the North and to have thanked you personally for the very kind and welcome letter which I received from you just before I sailed, but I merely passed through New York on my way to New London, and so was disappointed.

"We have come back with our good ship much improved after a very pleasant visit to Philadelphia and have once more settled down to the heavy and monotonous life on this dull coast.

"I see that the New York papers are full of the terror felt at Port Royal in consequence of rebel rams said to have been built at Savannah and Charleston. I assure you that there is no alarm felt here, and the stories in the newspapers are gross exaggerations. The *Fingal* which is described with so many phrases in the *New York Times* is a small iron steamer, which, after vainly endeavoring to get out with a load of cotton last winter, was armed with a light battery, and became the flagship of Tattnall's flotilla. From her construction she could not possibly be turned into a mailclad vessel, nor could she carry a heavy armament.

"There is no doubt that the Savannah people have an ironclad vessel, but we are led to believe that it is intended solely for the defense of the town, and that its steam power is barely sufficient to move it against the current.

"Much more formidable vessels are probably in process of construction at Charleston, and may give us serious trouble before



the year is over. I understand that the naval constructor who equipped the *Merrimac* is at work upon them.

"The health of our squadron continues to be excellent, but the weather has been fearfully hot.

"I have my son Raymond (later Rear Admiral Raymond Rodgers) with me, having brought him out to spend his vacation. He goes home on Sunday in the *Massachusetts*. It has been very pleasant to me to have the little fellow.

"Let me congratulate you, my dear friend, most heartily upon your promotion." (This refers to the order of July 16th, 1862, by which Commander Radford was promoted to the grade of Captain.) "I hope before many years are over to serve under your Admiral's flag. There are very few men in the Navy under whom I should serve with such entire satisfaction." (This hope was realized in 1869.)

"I hear very gratifying accounts of your energetic administration at the New York Navy Yard. You must have your hands very full of work.

"Corbin, who has held fast to the *Wabash* steadily, although repeatedly offered the command of smaller vessels of the squadron, has at last been promoted, and will relieve me in command of this ship, while I devote myself entirely to my duties as Fleet Captain. I have performed both duties since Davis left us, last spring. This has been arranged at my suggestion.

"I beg you to remember me most respectfully and most affectionately to Mrs. Radford, and to give my best love to all your children. I especially want to see my Godson," (George Reginald Radford, now (1920) living in Bethlehem, Pa.), "but it may be very long before I get North again. . . .

"I remain, dear Radford,

"ever your warmly attached friend,

"C. R. P. Rodgers."

"P. S. We are very desirous to get a band for our flagship; will you have the kindness to speak to Admiral Paulding on the subject, and remind him of it from time to time? I suppose Admiral Du Pont will write to him today. Corbin goes home in the *Massachusetts* for a fortnight and will speak to you about the band.

"15 Aug. The Admiral (Du Pont) has just asked me to remember him to you in the warmest terms of regard."

"The South Atlantic coast was throughout the war the favorite ground for blockade runners, and the hardest blockading duty was performed in that quarter. Rich prizes were sometimes taken, and watchful commanders often reaped uncommon rewards; but with it all there was a monotonous watchfulness that wore men out, and many officers after the war fell into bad health, if they did not altogether succumb to the influence of a climate which in winter or summer was not conducive to longevity."<sup>1</sup>

Another letter may be interesting because of the fact that the Spanish officer of whom it speaks was, after the Civil War, attached to the Spanish Legation in Washington, where, as Admiral Polo de Barnabé, he was a universal favorite:

"Frigate *Ironsides*,  
"off Charleston, March 7th,/63.

"My dear Radford,

"Capt. Polo, of the Spanish frigate *Carmen*, is going direct to New York, and I give him a letter to present to you, that he may receive some attention from our officers while in your neighborhood.

"These Spanish officers deserve this consideration, for they have studiously kept themselves aloof from our family quarrel,

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Porter's "Naval History."

unlike some other nations; and this officer seems a particularly nice fellow; besides, he speaks English very fluently.

“ Sincerely yours,

“ T. Turner.”

The following letter is given in view of the splendid standing of the Marine Corps as a fighting unit:

“ Head Quarters, Marine Corps,

“ Washington, D. C., Dec, 7th, 1863.

“ Sir,

“ In consequence of an effort which I understand is about to be repeated at an early day during the ensuing Session of Congress, viz. to transfer the Marine Corps to the Army as an additional Regiment, I am desirous of obtaining the opinion & wishes of officers of high standing in the Navy.

“ Will you be so good as to give me your opinion as to the necessity for, and efficiency of, Marines on shore and afloat, in connection with the Navy? Whether they have not generally been effective wherever employed, and if in your opinion, they are not a necessary part of the crew of a Vessel of War. Also if an increase in number is not required by the exigencies of the service.

“ Very respectfully,

“ Your Obedt. Servt.,

“ Jno. Harris, Col. Comdt.

“ Capt. Wm. Radford,

“ U. S. Navy, Navy Yard, New York.

I regret not having my father's answer to this letter. It would be of especial interest because two of his grandsons are today in that branch of the service.

On April 24th, 1863, Captain Radford was promoted to Commodore.

During the early spring of 1864 Admiral Paulding was ordered to Washington on court martial duty, and the following extracts of letters received by him whilst in that city from Commodore Radford show how the work at the Brooklyn Navy Yard progressed in his absence.

“ March 9th,/64.

“ I have just time to congratulate you upon the return of your son, Lt. Paulding,” (Lt. Tattnell Paulding, whose liberation from Libby Prison had recently been effected through an exchange of prisoners), “ and hope you will soon see him. . . . The Treasurer tells Paymaster Barry he cannot give him small notes. I have written about it to the Secretary of the Navy today requesting small notes may be sent from Washington. . . . Everything is getting on well in the Yard. . . . ”

“ Mar. 15th.

“ . . . I regretted your absence when the Naval Committee visited the Yard. They came late and remained a very short time. Mrs. Radford had made preparations for their reception and was disappointed at not having the pleasure of seeing so many distinguished men at one time. The Yard is in a contented state as the Paymaster has money and is now paying the men. . . .

“ Your son looks very well considering his long confinement. . . .

“ I would have written you a more satisfactory letter—to myself at all events—but officers are constantly running in, and that unfortunate vessel the *Kensington* has just returned—boilers won't hold steam. . . . ”

“ Mar. 20th,/64.

“ Everything is progressing satisfactorily in the Yard. I believe we could send a fleet to sea if sailors could be obtained. None have come in from the Army as yet.



"I sent the *Niagara* in search of the Italian line-of-battle ship, giving her seamen belonging to other vessels, some twenty-nine all told. She had landsmen to fill up, which will give them a chance to get over their first seasickness, and make them equal to ordinary seamen on their return. The *Onondaga* has taken all the seamen we have now. . . . She is ready as far as the Yard is concerned, and I am doing everything in my power to carry out the wishes of the Department to get her off as soon as possible.

"I saw your son, the Lieut. this morning. He has his leave for thirty days."

"Mar. 22d./64."

". . . Case has reported and asked for a few days' leave, when he will assume his duties. You cannot regret more than myself the severance" (Commodore Radford had received orders detaching him from the Brooklyn Navy Yard), "but I have ever been ready for any duty the Dept. might require of me. Mrs. Radford immediately on being informed went to see Mrs. Paulding for 'condolence.'"

"Mar. 23rd.

". . . I shall put the *Onondaga* in commission tomorrow. We have a very cold snowstorm today which makes everything look bleak and gloomy. I am afraid your Court will detain you a very long time in Washington, but I trust the relief from official duties at this Yard will set you up for your summer work."

"Mar. 27th.

"I received yours of the 23rd yesterday. . . . From present appearances I am afraid the Court will keep you much longer in Washington than you expected or wished. . . . Case's family live in New Burgh, on the North River. By the time you return I hope to have him in good training, and in a short while thereafter be able to turn over my duties to him. I have made ar-

rangements for my family to go to Morristown, N. J., but I shall 'keep quiet,' and let the Dept. dispose of me.

"How well you describe the 'aged' Admiral." (Undoubtedly Stockton.) "I have known him all my life. He was a ruffled-shirt, dashing officer in his younger days; always keeping himself well on deck, with his weather eye open. . . . We hope to see you back with us soon. . . . I thank you, dear Admiral, for your kind offer to serve me, and as I know you mean what you say, if the time comes I will ask what you have so kindly offered."

"Mar. 29th.

"Capt. Shufelt, of the *Proteus*, will hand you this. He goes to Washington as a witness, and I hope you or the court will permit him to come back as soon as possible as his vessel is to go with the *Onondaga* to Norfolk, and it is very desirable he should be on board. The *Onondaga* will be ready tonight, but as the weather is not favorable if Commander Shufelt is permitted to return tomorrow night he will in all probability be back in time to go in his vessel."

"Sunday April 3rd.

"I yesterday received yours and have but a few moments this morning, though it is Sunday, to write you. . . .

"The *Niagara* returned yesterday. She has had very heavy weather, and from Craven's account did not behave well until she was put before the wind. . . . I should like very much to see some of those ten thousand men from the Army—one only has been received as yet—but from what I can learn I think they *will* come in rapidly, and I will fill up the vessels now ready with all despatch. The only news I have of the progress of the court is in your letters which certainly do not show even the beginning of the end.

"In absence of any positive news from Paducah I am still in hopes that some of my houses are left standing."

This last phrase appeared utterly incomprehensible until rendered intelligible by the following words in my grandfather's diary. Ascribing always each and every event in life to Divine instrumentality, Mr. Lovell writes: "Another Providential interference in his (Wm. Radford's) favor occurred when Paducah was reported to be taken and destroyed by the Rebels. He has three stores and two dwelling houses there . . . which for a few days were supposed to have been destroyed. On the contrary his agent wrote immediately afterwards that his stores and dwellings were almost the only buildings that escaped injury from the shot and shell of our own vessels while firing into and among the buildings to drive out the Rebel invaders."

The *Niagara*, although reported as not behaving well, had nevertheless successfully fulfilled her mission, as is shown by the following letter.

"New York, April 10th,/64.

"I have the honor to inform you that after proposal of the Minister of Marine, His Majesty the King of Italy has bestowed upon you the decoration of Officer of the Equestrian order of S.S. Maurizio & Lazzaro, as a reward for the assistance you afforded to the Italian frigate *Ré d'Italia* when she got ashore near Long Branch.

"Having been appointed to deliver you said decoration and the letter which accompanies it, I shall be very happy, Commodore, to learn from you when, after getting the proper permission of Congress, you will be able to accept them.

"I am, Your most obdt. Servant,

"Del Santo,

"Capt. of frigate, R. I. N."

"Commodore Radford, U. S. N.,

"Brooklyn Navy Yard."

In his reply to Captain Del Santo, Commodore Radford wrote that he fully appreciated the intended honor, and would lay the communication before the Hon. Secretary of the Navy; and there the matter rested for months and even years to come.

On May 15th, 1864, Commodore Radford was detached from the Brooklyn Navy Yard and granted one month's leave of absence. Later orders, however, directed him to proceed to Charleston, S. C. by June 1st, and report to Rear Admiral Dahlgren for the command of the U. S. Steamer *New Ironsides*. This latter order was subsequently modified by another directing him to await the arrival of the *New Ironsides* at Philadelphia, where she was being sent for repairs.

Before entering upon that important period of Commodore Radford's career I should like to record a set of Resolutions forwarded to him after his departure from the Brooklyn Navy Yard, of which the following extracts are copied verbatim from the original.

"At a meeting of the Master Workmen of the Brooklyn Navy Yard held at the Niagara House on Thursday evening June 2nd, 1864,

"The Chairman briefly explained the object of the meeting which was to express the feelings entertained by the Master Workmen for Commodore William Radford, late Executive Officer of this Station.

"On motion, a Committee of five was appointed to report preamble and resolutions for the action of the meeting. . . .

"After a brief absence the Committee reported the following, which was unanimously adopted:

"Whereas, Commodore William Radford has been the Executive Officer of the Brooklyn Navy Yard for the past two years, and,



"Whereas, he is now detached from the Yard, and ordered on sea duty, and,

"Whereas, the Master Workmen having charge of the several departments having found in him a prompt, efficient, and laborious Officer of the Government; at all times on duty, early and late, whenever the interests of the Government required it; and conspicuous for his courteous and gentlemanly bearing to us all; therefore,

"Resolved, that we owe it to ourselves to express our heartfelt thanks to, and our kind regards for, him; that success, prosperity and happiness may ever attend his pathway through life; and that he may finally reap the reward beyond the grave that remaineth for all true and faithful patriots.

"Resolved, that the Chairman and Secretary cause a copy of the preamble and resolutions to be forwarded to Commodore Radford.

"A. H. Gale,  
Chairman.

"William Atkinson,  
"Secretary."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE "NEW IRONSIDES"

IN the summer of 1864 the *New Ironsides*, named in honor of the *Constitution*, familiarly known as *Old Ironsides*, came up from off Charleston to Philadelphia where she was laid up for repairs.

Launched on May 10th, 1862, at the yard of Wm. Cramp & Sons, Philadelphia, this formidable ironclad had already taken part as the flagship of Rear Admiral Du Pont in the attack on Fort Sumter, April 7th, 1863; and had participated in the engagements at Forts Wagner and Moultrie under Rear Admiral Dahlgren, earning thereby for herself the love and confidence of her officers and crew, as well as the justly founded respect and fear of the enemy.

She was a huge mass of wood and iron, not handsome by any means from a sailor's point of view. She was bark-rigged, and mounted in broadside fourteen eleven-inch guns, besides two 150 pounder Parrott rifles—all on her gun-deck. She had also on the spar-deck, for signaling and the like, two 60-pounder rifles and two Dahlgren howitzers. She had immense beam and a very light draft of water so that she could carry her heavy battery into soundings where most large vessels could not go. Her armor was of fourteen-inch plates, with port shutters of the same, the plates much indented by shots from the forts at Charleston.

Carrying a very large complement of officers and men, and handling her heavy guns with almost as much ease and quickness as if they were thirty-two pounders, the *New Ironsides* was a

terror to all hostile batteries, for, once in position, she could pour in such a fire of shell that it was almost impossible for her opponents to stand at their guns. Her ends were not armored, and these had been often penetrated by shot, but no one had ever been killed on her gun-deck by the enemy's fire during the many engagements in which she had borne so prominent a part. The engines and boilers of the *Ironsides* were very fine, but unfortunately they had not power enough for the great mass in which they were placed, and would only drive her six knots under the most favorable circumstances. Her steering apparatus too was always getting out of order as she had a curiously contrived rudder fashioned like a double flap, or folding shutter, and intended to double upon itself something like the tail of a fish. This rudder gave a great deal of trouble at the battle of Fort Fisher, but despite this handicap, which, as we shall see, was remedied, she did her work nobly.

The repairs occupied all the summer of 1864, during the early part of which Commodore Radford was relieved of his command and ordered to attend a Naval Board meeting in Washington in the month of July, as witness. On August 1st he received orders to report anew on the 16th of that month "for the command of the U. S. Steamer *New Ironsides*."

My mother, who spent some little time in Philadelphia before the date of the ship's sailing, brought back as a parting gift from my father, a Bible for each of the children, with the names and date "Aug. 27th, 1864," inscribed therein. I have mine beside me as I write—a treasured possession!

On September 22nd of that year the command of the North Atlantic Squadron which had been refused by Admiral Farragut because of failing health, was offered to Rear Admiral D. D. Porter.

The well-known saying that "great men seldom beget great

sons," finds a notable exception in the case of Commodore Porter, for he gave to his country two sons, David D. and William D., who were both distinguished for the very traits that had made their father so remarkable, and of whom the former was at least as famous as himself.

David Dixon Porter was born June 8, 1813, in the town of Chester, Pa. He entered Columbia College, Washington, D. C., at the early age of eleven years, but made only a brief stay there, as, in 1824 he accompanied his father to the West Indies, where Commodore Porter was sent by the government to break up the gang of pirates that infested those seas.

During the War of 1812 Commodore Porter had been the terror of British commerce, for, with his good ship *Essex*, he had made even greater havoc of their merchant marine than did Raphael Semmes with our own during the Civil War. Porter's career, in his famous ship *Essex*, made him a popular hero, but having punished with some severity, during his cruise against the pirates, the authorities of one of the islands that had insulted his flag, he was ordered home, and tried by a court-martial, which convicted him of having transcended his authority, and sentenced him to a suspension of six months. Indignant and disgusted with this unmerited punishment, he threw up his commission, and joined the Navy of Mexico, which country was then fighting with Spain for her independence. He served in the Mexican Navy until 1829, when he resigned and returned to this country.

Commodore Porter had four sons, all of whom were officers in either the U. S. Navy or Army. The youngest of the four was David Dixon, who served sixty-two years in the Navy.

True to hereditary traditions young David took to the water at a very early age, serving with his father, as we have said, against the West India pirates when but eleven years old. When, in 1826, Commodore Porter took command of the Mexican



Navy he secured a midshipman's commission for his son David in that service. In 1827 Midshipman David D. Porter was detailed to the brig *Guerrero*, under command of his cousin Captain D. H. Porter, who had also entered the Mexican service. On this cruise the *Guerrero*, having attacked and completely dismantled two Spanish brigs, was in turn attacked by a 64-gun frigate; Captain Porter was killed in one of the most desperate and unequal battles on record, and the brig, with her masts shot away and in a sinking condition, finally surrendered. The fourteen year old midshipman was taken prisoner, and confined in the guard ship at Havana, but was soon released and permitted to return to this country, where, on February 2nd, 1829, he was commissioned a midshipman in the U. S. Navy, and sailed in the *Constellation* for the Mediterranean.

On February 27th, 1841, he was commissioned Lieutenant, and after a cruise in the frigate *Congress* to the Mediterranean and coast of Brazil he was employed at the Naval Observatory, under Lieutenant Maury. When the war with Mexico broke out he was ordered to proceed to New Orleans and raise men for Commodore Conner's fleet.

Lieutenant Porter was with Tattnall, as First Lieutenant of the *Spitfire*, when the latter attacked the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa, and the town batteries. No vessel performed more active service than the *Spitfire* while Lieutenant Porter was on her.

When the Mexican War ended he applied for and obtained a furlough, during which, for four years, he commanded the mail steamers *Panama* and *Georgia*, which plied between New York and the Isthmus of Darien.

At the beginning of the Civil War he was ordered to command the steam frigate *Powhatan*, which was despatched to join the Gulf Blockading Squadron at Pensacola, and to aid in reinforcing Fort Pickens. On April 22nd, 1861, he was appointed Com-

mander, and subsequently placed in command of the mortar fleet, consisting of twenty-one schooners, each carrying a 13-inch mortar, and with five steamers as convoys, joined Farragut's fleet in March, 1862. For six days and nights he bombarded Forts Jackson and St. Philip, below New Orleans, discharging at them no less than 16,800 shells. Then occurred the famous river fight and running of the forts by Farragut, when he sailed up to New Orleans and captured it. He passed the forts on April 24th, and four days later they surrendered to Porter and his mortar flotilla.

The next conspicuous service of Commodore Porter was in the operations upon the Mississippi between New Orleans and Vicksburg. His bombardment of the Vicksburg forts enabled Farragut to pass them.

In September, 1862, Porter received command of the Mississippi Squadron as Acting Rear Admiral, the fleet being increased from twelve vessels to many times that number. Early in 1863 he co-operated with General Sherman in the reduction of Arkansas Post, and later attacked, in conjunction with General Grant, the enemy's works at Grand Gulf.

Late in 1864, being then still in command on the Mississippi, he was ordered to co-operate with General Butler in the reduction of Fort Fisher and the other defenses of Wilmington, N. C. He immediately turned over the Mississippi Squadron to Captain Pennock, and hastened north to Hampton Roads, which was at that time as busy and crowded a port as could be found throughout the world. General Grant was besieging Petersburg, and all the supplies for his large force passed up the James River. The harbor was filled with steam and sailing transports carrying provisions, coal, powder, shell, and soldiers. Immediately after his arrival, Admiral Porter commenced to assemble the powerful fleet destined to attack the important stronghold of Fort Fisher.

Besides the many armed vessels, frigates, sloops-of-war, monitors, and "nondescripts" of the Union forces, there lay also in the Roads several foreign men-of-war, conspicuous amongst which was the Russian Fleet under command of Admiral Lyssofsky. This consisted of the flagship, *Alexandre Nevsky*; the frigates *Osliba*, Captain Boutakoff; and *Pereswelt*, Captain Kopoutoff; with the corvettes, *Variag*, Captain Lund; and *Vitiase*, Captain Kremmer. With Admiral Lyssofsky my father was on terms of cordial intimacy, and as they were seated together one day in the cabin of the *Alexandre Nevsky* the Russian Commander-in-Chief in a sudden, though perhaps premeditated, burst of confidence, informed his visitor that he bore with him orders to place his ships at the disposal of the United States government should any other country evince a disposition to intervene in behalf of the Confederacy.

Many years later, I being then in Petrograd, was informed by Mr. Clifton R. Breckenridge, the lately arrived American Minister Plenipotentiary, that those identical orders had been shown to him upon his first visit to the Russian Foreign Office, and he had thus, he added, "been given proof positive that Russia alone of all the great foreign powers, had stood solidly back of the Union during the dark days of our Civil War."

Shortly after arriving at Hampton Roads the *Ironsides* was ordered up to the Norfolk Navy Yard where she was put in fighting trim, and, after coaling, sent to Fort Norfolk to have her huge magazine filled with powder, shot, and shell. Two thousand five hundred bread bags filled with sand were also placed on the spar deck as protection against a plunging fire.

By the 15th of October, 1864, the ships-of-war destined to attack Fort Fisher were assembled at Hampton Roads to the number of about one hundred. Every class in the Navy was represented, from the lofty frigate down to the fragile steamer taken

from the merchant service, but all carried good guns. There were five Commodores in the fleet, the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Divisions being commanded respectively by Commodores Thatcher, Lanman, Godon, and Schenck; while the Ironclad Division, consisting of the Flagship *New Ironsides*, with the *Dictator*, *Monadnock*, *Canonicus*, *Saugus*, and *Mahopac* was commanded by Commodore Radford.

"From all these officers Rear Admiral Porter received hearty support, although, owing to the fortunes of war, he had been advanced over their heads, and naturally expected to find some little feeling in regard to it; but there was none whatever. They met the Admiral in the most cordial manner and ever gave him their heartiest support."<sup>1</sup>

At this period of the war the principal infractions of the blockade took place by way of Cape Fear River, the other channels being either in possession of Federal forces or effectually closed. To guard both entrances of the Cape Fear a space of sixty miles or more had to be patrolled; and although a large force was already stationed there, the blockade runners, which were swift, low vessels, would slip in of a dark night in spite of every exertion. At this point millions of dollars' worth of stores, munitions of war, cotton, etc., had made their entry and exit during the war. It was therefore all important to close this river, and in order to do so Fort Fisher must be taken, when Fort Caswell and the other forts and batteries would fall of themselves.

The fleet being in readiness, wonder was expressed at the long delay in the attack. The weather had become wintry and bad, and still they did not move. It then began to be rumored they were waiting for some infernal machine to be finished, which was said to have been conceived in the fertile brain of General Butler, who had been appointed to command the land forces that were to

<sup>1</sup> Porter's "Naval History."



co-operate with the Navy in the attack. A boat, it seemed, was to be run in at night under the walls of Fort Fisher and there exploded, when the walls of the fort were to crumble more promptly than those of Jericho, and the garrison was to be so completely stunned as to allow the officers and men of Admiral Porter's fleet to walk quietly into the fort at their convenience.

Finally, on the 16th of December, 1864, the fleet sailed from Hampton Roads, ironclads, frigates, sloops-of-war and transports, and next day got around Cape Hatteras, the large vessels anchoring off Cape Lookout, while the small craft and monitors went into Beaufort, N. C. On the 18th, the fleet got under way again for the rendezvous, which was off Fort Fisher, twenty miles from shore.

There they anchored, in twenty-five fathoms of water. Admiral Porter, in the meantime, had put into Beaufort, to give another look at the fittings of the powder boat, for he was determined to do everything to make the experiment a success, even although he knew it was all folly. When all was ready the Admiral proceeded to the rendezvous off the entrance to Cape Fear River.

The Confederates had at that time about eighteen hundred men in the fort, under command of Col. William Lamb, a gallant and capable soldier, while Major-General Wm. H. C. Whiting, formerly of the U. S. Engineers, commanded all the defenses of the Cape Fear River.

The day set for the explosion of the powder boat was December 18th, but the "swell increasing towards night" General Butler sent word to the Admiral "that he thought the attempt premature, and requested that it be postponed until the sea went down." To this Admiral Porter at once agreed, yet General Butler afterwards complained of the delay, grounding his failure on that circumstance. It was just as well that the attempt was not made on the

day appointed, for, on the following morning, a heavy gale came on from the southeast with a tremendous swell setting towards the beach, so that it was thought at one time all the vessels would have to leave the coast to avoid being driven on shore. General Butler and his transports had disappeared and sought refuge in the harbor of Beaufort."

"No occurrence," writes Admiral Porter, "during the war reflects more credit on the Navy than the way that large fleet rode out the gale, anchored in twenty fathoms water, with the whole Atlantic Ocean rolling in upon them. As far as the eye could reach, the line of vessels extended, each one with two anchors ahead and one hundred and twenty fathoms of chain on each. The wind blew directly on shore, the sea breaking heavily, and appearing as if it would sweep everything before it, yet only one vessel in all the line left her anchorage and stood out to sea as a place of safety. It was indeed a grand sight to see these ships riding out such a gale on such a coast in midwinter. The most experienced seamen will long remember the event as the only case on record where a large fleet rode out a gale at anchor on our coast."

Five days this tempestuous weather lasted, and when the gale finally abated, news came that the famous torpedo boat would be exploded on the night of the 23rd of December, as near the beach at Fort Fisher as it was possible to get her. The vessel to be used for this purpose was the steamer *Louisiana*, which had been altered into a huge torpedo. About two hundred tons of powder had been placed on board and ingenious means devised to explode it. The fleet had a great respect for this dangerous neighbor, and once when she parted her cable in the heavy sea, and came drifting down upon the *Ironsides*, every one was rather anxious until it was certain she would go clear of the ship.

On the night of the 23rd the *Louisiana* was towed to within a short distance of her station by the steamer *Wilderness*, which vessel then remained in the vicinity to take off the party when they should have done their work.

Exactly at 1.30 A.M. of December 24th, the powder boat went up in the air, making a report which seemed to those on the fleet some miles distant no greater than that of two 15-inch guns fired together. The result was absolutely *nil*, a mere waste of time and money in so far as any damage to the fort was concerned. The expedition which had been so long in preparing, and which had set out with such a flourish of trumpets, had failed!

Admiral Porter, who had anticipated some such *dénouement*, had issued his orders the preceding evening and at daylight on December 24th, 1864, the fleet got under way, and stood in, in line of battle.

"At 11.30 A.M. the signal was made to engage the forts, the *Ironsides* leading, and the *Monadnock*, *Canonicus*, and *Mahopac* following. The *Ironsides* took her position in the most beautiful and seamanlike manner, . . . and opened deliberate fire on the forts at that time opening on *her* with all its guns, which did not seem numerous in the northeast face, though what appeared to be seventeen were counted. These . . . were silenced almost as soon as the fleet opened all their batteries."

"A few heavy shots struck us," writes Dr. Shippen, Naval Surgeon on the *Ironsides*,<sup>1</sup> "cut away our rail and lower rigging, dashed about the sand bags on our spar deck and indented the armor. One ten-inch solid shot came in at one unarmored end forward, entered the sick bay, made a general smash of the contents of the dispensary, and was deflected from the berth deck by a barricade of hammocks; just cleared a cot in which was lying

<sup>1</sup> *Lippincott's Magazine*, March, 1878, "The *Ironsides* at Fort Fisher."

the body of a marine who had died shortly before we went into action, and finally imbedded itself in the oak waterway."

In an hour and a quarter after the first shot was fired not a shot came from the fort, and the ships were directed to keep up a moderate fire only.

At sunset General Butler arrived with a few transports, but as it was too late to do anything more, the fleet retired for the night to a safe anchorage. All hands got something to eat, the watch was set, and all who could went to sleep early.

The next day, Christmas, was fine and mild, and a signal was made at 7 A.M. for the ships to get under way and form in line of battle, which was quickly done. The order to attack was given, and "the *Ironsides* took the position in her usual handsome style, the monitors following close after her."

During the forenoon the transport fleet approached and began to land troops on the beach two miles or more above the fort. About three thousand men had landed when the Admiral was notified they were re-embarking. He had seen the soldiers near the fort reconnoitering, and had hoped an assault was to be made.

The fleet drew off at sunset, with the exception of the iron-clads which continued firing throughout the night, in expectation of the troops attacking in the morning. The crews of these vessels were more fagged out than any of the others, not only through keeping up a constant fire—beginning first, and last to cease—but also because of the construction of the ships, the heavy guns, and the fact that they were firing most of the day against a light westerly wind which caused the men's eyes and throats to be affected by the powder and smoke. The blast from the guns being driven inboard by the breeze, many of the "spongers" were temporarily blinded by the rush of hot sulphurous air when loading and firing rapidly.

The fleet did not renew the attack the next day because of



General Butler's having withdrawn his troops and reported that "the place could not be carried by assault."<sup>1</sup>

This abandonment of the expedition by General Butler with his army created the greatest indignation among the naval forces who had thought the prize within their reach. It was but little consolation to reflect that it was no fault of the Navy or of the brave troops who had been brought so far for nothing. The expedition which had been so long in preparing, and which had set out with such a flourish of trumpets had failed.

After the transports had departed the fleet proceeded to Beaufort to fill up with coal and ammunition while awaiting promised reinforcements; for no sooner had General Butler's troops re-embarked than the Admiral sent a swift steamer to General Grant urging him to send "other troops and *another General*"; a request with which General Grant promised he would immediately comply.

While lying there off Beaufort, Commodore Radford wrote to Admiral Paulding as follows:

"I intended writing you when we had captured Fort Fisher, but as that has been postponed I will write you now and then also. The Squadron made a very handsome fight on the 24th and 25th of December and I think the troops could have occupied the Fort had they made an attack, as the Fort was silenced with the exception of one or two guns in casemates; but the greatest enemy the fleet has had to encounter is the tempestuous weather. I have lost the use of my rudder, it having had the head twisted entirely off just above the blade, and yet I have again to lead the fleet into action. I will do my best, but a ship like this without the use of her rudder will be apt to go where she pleases.

"I hear from you frequently through Mrs. Radford and recollect with pleasure our past association.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix at end of volume.

"Do you intend doing anything in regard to the compliment offered you by the King of Italy? Congress should give us the privilege of answering one way or another.

"Give my kindest regards to your family."

On January 8th, 1865, Major-General A. H. Terry arrived at Beaufort to take command of the Army that was to co-operate with the Navy in capturing Fort Fisher.

On January 12th, the fleet sailed from Beaufort, and at 8 A.M. on the 13th, the transports commenced to land General Terry's troops, batteries, and provisions. By two o'clock there were 8,000 troops on shore, with all their stores and munitions of war.

While these army movements were taking place the fleet was moving into position for the attack. The *Ironsides*, leading, was followed in by the monitors *Monadnock*, Commander E. G. Parrott; *Canonicus*, Lieutenant-Commander G. E. Belknap; *Saugus*, Commander G. R. Colhoun; and *Mahopac*, Lieutenant-Commander A. W. Weaver.

Steaming to within eight hundred yards of the fort, which opened upon them as they approached, they took up their position without firing a gun until they were ready, then only opening their batteries. The firing was returned very briskly, showing the garrison had received reinforcements and had mounted more heavy guns.

"As the wooden ships were engaged landing troops," Commodore Radford reported of this engagement, "the ironclad division received the fire nearly all day alone from Fort Fisher, without receiving any very material damage, and remained in position during the night. By orders from Admiral Porter the ironclad Division commenced the action at 10.47 A.M. on the 14th instant, and continued firing until after dark. On the morning of the 15th, we commenced the action at 7.16 A.M., and continued to fire during the day, concentrating it upon the guns of the battery

which was doing the most effective work, which was invariably soon silenced or disabled. As the troops were advancing, I observed two field pieces in the rear of the fort firing on them, which we soon silenced with some well-directed shells from this ship. When the enemy came out of their bomb-proofs to defend the fort against the storming party, I used my battery with great success against them, every shell bursting, apparently, in the right place. At 5.20 P.M. we ceased firing by orders from the flagship, nearly every gun on the fort facing us having been disabled in the first two days' action. I cannot close my report without speaking in the highest terms of the battery of this ship, and the manner in which it was served for three consecutive days, my officers and men fighting all day and taking in ammunition during the night. I know of nothing surpassing it on record. I would now speak of the monitors, and the handsome manner in which they were handled and fought during the time; and the different attacks on Fort Fisher have not only proved that they could ride out heavy gales at sea, but fight their guns in moderately smooth weather, which has been doubted by many intelligent officers."

An amusing incident during the first day of the engagement was the conduct of a game cock, a great pet among the crew of the *Ironsides*.

On previous days of fighting he had been carefully put away below but this time he had escaped from durance vile and promenaded the spar deck fluttering his wings and crowing loudly, apparently enjoying the roar of the battle. By nightfall he was as hoarse and husky as any of the division officers, and he had had one or two very narrow escapes from shot and splinters.

"The 15th of January broke clear and bright," writes Dr. Shippen, "and we went in closer than ever, in fact until we were barely afloat, and recommenced the bombardment about 8 o'clock. At eleven o'clock the troops being all landed and entrenched, the

storming party of marines and sailors from the fleet pulled for the beach and were soon established on the dry land. The ironclad division sent no men to the storming party, as these vessels were to keep up a deliberate fire, or to open on the fort again in case our men were repelled.

"About 2.30 the naval column was ready to advance. It moved along the beach with the intention of assaulting, or 'boarding' the sea face of the main work. As the fire from the fleet ceased the garrison came out of their bomb-proofs in a swarm and manning the parapet of the sea face shot down our men as though they were partridges in a covey. The losses were very heavy, twenty-one officers from the Navy alone being killed or wounded. But their lives were not thrown away, for the naval attack made a diversion, drawing the garrison to the sea face, and distracting their attention from the movement of the troops, who, emerging from the fringe of scrub wood about the fort, formed into line of battle—all veterans from the James River! Without beat of drum—with arms at 'right shoulder shift,'—they proceeded at a double quick across the sandy plain extending to the base of the huge mamelons which formed the land side of the fort at right angles with the beach. Nearly all the guns on that side had been dismounted, but the garrison opened on the assaulting force with musketry, while a howitzer cut gaps in the advancing lines at each discharge.

"Not a shot was returned by our men. The line curved sometimes as the grape from the howitzer tore through it, but the officers would spring to the front, steady the men, and the gap was soon closed. Soon they reached the foot of the huge earth-works, and the axes were seen to gleam as the strong palisade was cleared away.

"At last we see our own men on one of the western mamelons. A sharp fight takes place for the first traverse; men killed or



wounded roll down the steep incline; the shouts and yells grow louder; and then comes a rush, a pell-mell struggle, and we see the colors slowly rise and finally gain the top of the next mound. Here the same determined resistance and the same close fighting go on, to be followed by another cheer, another rush, and the taking of the next point. At this time General Terry signaled to our ship to fire into the traverses ahead of the assaulting troops, and afterwards signaled to say: 'Just right! You are throwing your shell just where they are needed.'

"At dusk our ship was obliged to cease firing, as we could no longer distinguish between friends and foes."

Although the *Ironsides* ceased firing at 5.20 P.M. on the 15th, the fighting in the fort continued until about ten o'clock, when the garrison, in number about 1,800 surrendered. The fact was at once communicated to the fleet by signal lanterns, and round after round of hearty cheers went up from every ship. The weary, smoke-begrimed crews turned in, well satisfied that at last their perseverance had been rewarded by complete success.

"Thus," says Admiral Porter, "was Fort Fisher won after a gallant attack and as gallant a defense on the part of the Confederates as any one interested in their cause might desire. It was a terrible sight to see those men, all of one blood, sternly fighting in the dark for over four hours, almost breast to breast, shooting or bayoneting each other on the tops of the traverses or around the sides, while the *Ironsides* would explode her 11-inch shrapnel so well timed that they would burst over the heads or in amongst the struggling mass of Confederates, who were doing their utmost to hold on to the traverses behind the bomb-proof; but when the calcium-light of the *Malvern*" (Admiral Porter's flagship) "was thrown upon these desperate soldiers, and exposed them plainly to the *Ironsides*' gunners, they were swept away by the dozen. Never did men fight harder than the Con-

federates, and never were cooler soldiers than the Federals, who gained traverse after traverse with the aid of the wondrous fire of the *Ironsides* until they stood on the last one, when the enemy fled to the beach near the Mound, pursued by the Federal troops; and the former, having no hope of escape, laid down their arms and submitted to their captors.

“Three cheers went up from the Federal soldiers, the crews on board the ships made the welkin ring with their shouts of joy, the steam-whistles blew, the bells rang, sky-rockets filled the air, and every yard-arm was illuminated with the Coston night-signals. Not a man there but saw this was the death blow to the rebellion. No more army provisions or clothing could enter the only open port—Wilmington. Submission might not come immediately, but the end was not far off. The soldiers who had so strenuously fought to gain the stronghold could now, at the end of the war, join their families with the proud boast that they were the assaulters that finally carried Fort Fisher, while the Navy, that had for so many days breasted the storms of winter on the dangerous coast of North Carolina, could, in years to come, tell their companions how, for thirty-five days, they had fought the ocean in its wrath and defied the elements; how they had coaled their ships and taken in their ammunition while the vessels were rolling and pitching like mad, and how they had battered the heaviest earthwork in the Southern Confederacy until not a gun remained serviceable on its carriage.

“The casualties of the Federal Army were 691 officers and men killed, wounded and missing, while the Navy lost 309 more. The defeated but gallant enemy went into the battle 2,500 strong and surrendered only 1,800 men.”

Early on the morning of January 16th, a terrible explosion occurred in the fort. A bomb-proof was blown up, whether accidentally or otherwise was never known. About one hundred

bodies, Union soldiers and sailors and Confederates were all hurled together into the air. It was a sickening sight and took away much of the pleasure of the victory.

Immediately after the explosion, the *Ironsides* was ordered to haul off to a safer anchorage, and, to the great joy of all, to heave overboard the mass of sand which had so long encumbered the spar deck, making it resemble a desert waste rather than the spotless promenade of a man-of-war.

Another good reason for getting rid of the sand was, that as the ship had fired nearly four thousand rounds, the shell room and magazine were about empty and the weight of sand on the upper deck made her topheavy and tipsy in her motions.

While this was being done Commodore Radford, accompanied by a party of officers, among whom was Dr. Shippen, went ashore to visit the fort. On their way they passed boat loads of wounded being taken either to their own vessels or to the hospital ship. The beach was strewn with fragments of shell, musket balls, etc., and dead bodies. Climbing to the top of one of the traverses, a height of about forty feet, they had a fine view of the fort, and while standing there they were accosted by the Major of a Pennsylvania regiment who told them he was the only regimental field officer left for duty in the regiments which had composed the assaulting force.

On the afternoon of January 17th all hands on board the *New Ironsides* were called to muster, and the following letter from Admiral Porter was read:

" U. S. Flagship, *Malvern*,

" Off Fort Fisher, Jan. 17th, 1865.

" Commodore,

" You will proceed with your vessel to Norfolk, Va., in company with the U. S. S. *Susquehanna*, and, on your arrival there, will re-

port to the Honorable Secretary of the Navy, for further orders. In taking leave of you, permit me to express the high appreciation I feel of the services you have rendered me since you have been under my command. To your vessel, more than to any other in the Squadron, is the country indebted for the capture of the out-works of Cape Fear River. Ready at all times to go anywhere, you have, in my opinion, shown the highest qualities an officer can possess, and I have never tired, in looking on, in admiration at the endurance of your vessel, and the terrible execution she has done while in your hands. I hope it may be my good fortune to be associated with you again in a war against the enemies of our country, and I hope you may then command the same old *Ironsides*, with her present gallant officers and crew. I know the result will be victory. In the late assaults on the forts, the Army are mainly indebted to you for their success, for notwithstanding their gallantry, they could not have passed from traverse to traverse without the aid of your guns which swept the openings between the traverses, while the Army advanced from point to point, and the highest compliment I can pay your gunners is, to say that when I signaled to the General to know if he was not afraid of an accident from your guns ranging so close to his men, he replied, 'No, that your accuracy of fire was splendid.' When the *New Ironsides* goes, I shall part with you and her with regret, though no further assistance can be required of her here.

"While I am writing this (at 2 o'clock at night), the enemies' works at Fort Caswell are being blown up, in consequence of our capture of this stronghold, and thus ends the outside fortifications on Cape Fear River. If I could get your ship in the river Wilmington would be ours in a day.

"You will have the satisfaction of having been engaged in the most important event of the war, and of knowing that you have contributed vastly to the result.



" Please communicate to your officers and men the high opinion I entertain of them, and the physical endurance they have displayed in this long and harassing bombardment, and accept yourself the warmest wishes of

" Yours very truly and respectfully,

" David D. Porter,

" Rear Admiral."

" Commodore Wm. Radford, U. S. N.,

" Comd'g U. S. S. *New Ironsides*."

The officers of the *New Ironsides* during the attack upon Fort Fisher were: Commodore Wm. Radford; Lieutenant-Commander, R. L. Phythian; Lieutenants, A. R. McNair, H. B. Rumsey, and H. J. Blake; Surgeon, Edward Shippen; Assistant-Surgeon, G. A. Bright; Paymaster, George Plunkett; First Lieutenant of Marines, R. S. Collom; Acting Masters, H. P. Conner and George Dorey; Acting Ensigns, Walter Pearce, W. A. Duer, and J. W. King; Acting Masters, Masters' Mates, C. C. Bamford, J. F. Silva, and W. E. Wilson; Engineers: Chief, Alex. Greer; Second Assistants, J. H. Hunt, W. S. Cherry, W. J. Reid, N. P. Towne, and W. S. Wells; Third Assistants, J. K. Stevenson and A. H. Henderson; Boatswain, Wm. E. Leeds; Gunner, Wm. Cope; Carpenter, J. E. Cox; Sailmaker, G. T. Lozier.

In his report of January 28th, 1865, to the Secretary of the Navy, Admiral Porter writes:

" Commodore William Radford in command of that noble ship the *Ironsides*, and also in command of the Division of Monitors, gained my warmest admiration by his conduct throughout this affair. He has shown abilities of a very high character, not only in fighting and maneuvering his vessel but in taking care of his division. Ready at all times for battle, and eager to go into the fight alone, he performed admirably when

his guns were brought to bear on the enemy. His vessel did more execution than any vessel in the fleet; and even when our troops were on the parapet, I had so much confidence in the accuracy of his fire that he was directed to fire through the traverses in advance of our troops and clear them out. This he did most effectually, and but for this victory might not have been ours. Having broken his rudder in a heavy gale he rigged up a temporary one under adverse circumstances, and had his ship ready as soon as the rest. He seemed never to tire of fighting, and for three days laid within a thousand yards of Fort Fisher without moving his anchor, and made the rebels feel that we had come there to stay. Under all and every circumstance, Commodore Radford has acquired an enviable reputation, and is deserving of the greatest promotion that can be given him."

The *Ironsides* left for Hampton Roads just in time to avoid another long spell of cold stormy weather which caused much damage and suffering on the exposed coast where she had been.

From Fortress Monroe, Commodore Radford reports his arrival to the Hon. Gideon Welles, on January 20th, 1865, and writes:

"Having twisted off my rudder head and otherwise injured it in the gales off North Carolina, I rigged temporary steering-gear and can direct imperfectly the course of the vessel in smooth water, which, I am happy to say, we have had for the last eight days, with the exception of a few hours after I left Fort Fisher, when, though neither wind nor sea was strong I could not control the course of the vessel in the least.

"She has been otherwise considerably strained and requires caulking. Her repairs will necessitate docking. Though often struck she has not been much hurt by the balls of the enemy. One of her iron plates has been badly smashed by a ten-inch

solid shot; another came through her side just forward of her plating, etc."

But there was then no time for repairs, for, on January 24th, at 8.45 P.M., came a telegram from Washington, saying: "Proceed up James River with all possible despatch and assume command of James River Division. If your vessel will not go up, leave her, and take command at the front, reporting to Lieutenant-General Grant.

"Gideon Welles, Sec."

The response, sent immediately, read in part: "All ready; shall leave at early daylight." This was supplemented two days later by the following telegram:

"City Point, Va., Jan. 26th/65.

"Sir,

"I have the honor to report my arrival at 10 A.M. today, and I have reported to General Grant as ordered.

"Wm. Radford,

"Hon. Gideon Welles.

"Commo."

Foaming up the James River under her own steam, but with a powerful tug on either quarter, went the *Ironsides* to Bermuda Hundred, there to protect the immense stores of the Army of the Potomac, then before Petersburg, from a threatened raid of rebel rams. General Ord, who commanded on that flank, no sooner saw what manner of craft had come to his support, than he expressed himself as entirely satisfied, and said he should no longer trouble himself about rebel ironclads. Nor did they ever appear, but were shortly afterwards destroyed by their own people.

A telegram to Secretary Welles from Admiral Farragut, who was visiting the Headquarters of the U. S. Armies at that time,

reads, under date of January 26th: "Your telegram of the 25th received—All appears to be right. Radford is at his post with an ample force."

On January 27th, Commodore Radford reports from City Point to the Secretary of the Navy: "I returned from obstructions at midnight with Admiral Farragut who has left in the *Don*" (Lieutenant-Commander Eastman) "for Annapolis"; and another report of the same date sent from Bermuda Hundred to Admiral Porter, reads in part: "I have the honor to inform you that in obedience to orders from the Secretary of the Navy I took command of the James River Flotilla, etc."

In answer to the latter, Commodore Radford received a letter from Admiral Porter saying in part:

"I received your communication notifying me that you were in charge up the James. I only wish you had been there sooner, and then we would not have had that disgraceful stampede. I do not think the rebels will attempt anything more; they are closed up for this season, and if, as General Grant says, he can take Richmond when he pleases, . . . he may, I hope, soon have the rams on our side. I do not understand the ram fever. I never had it. . . . York River is in your Divison; will you inquire how matters are going on there. . . . I hope you will try an extensive torpedo system near the obstructions, . . .

"You will please send me frequent reports of matters, and do all that you may think necessary to make matters secure in the James. If the vessels want men, apply directly to the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting.

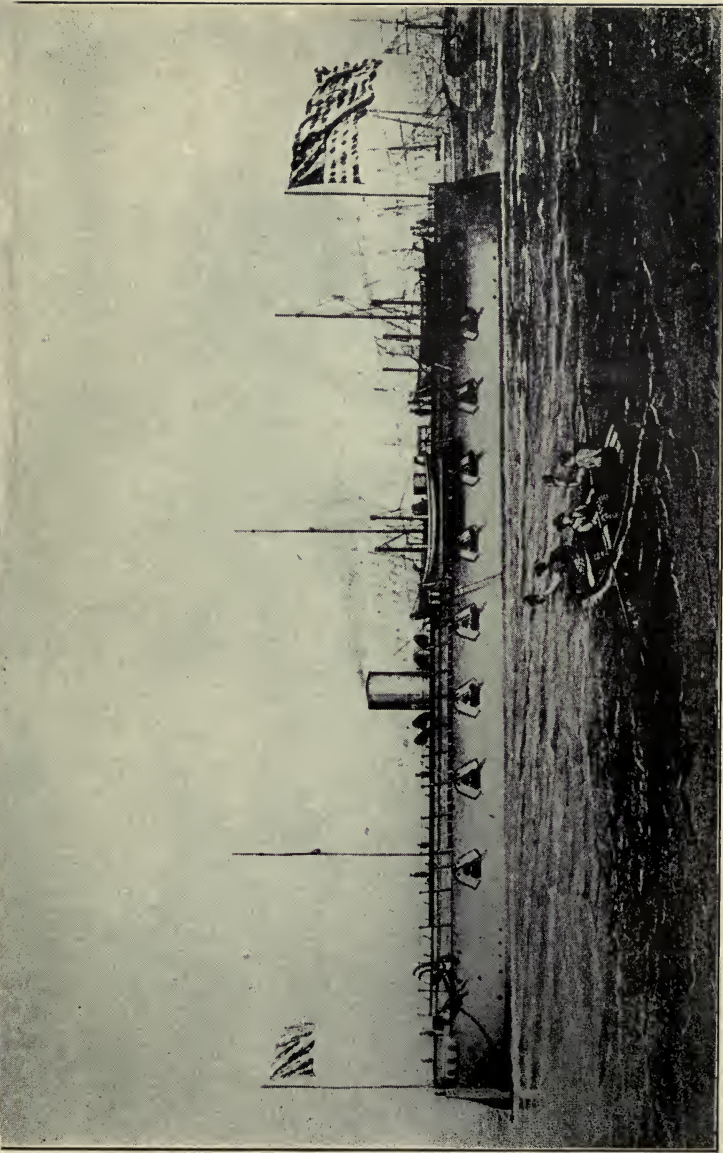
"Respectfully,

"David D. Porter."

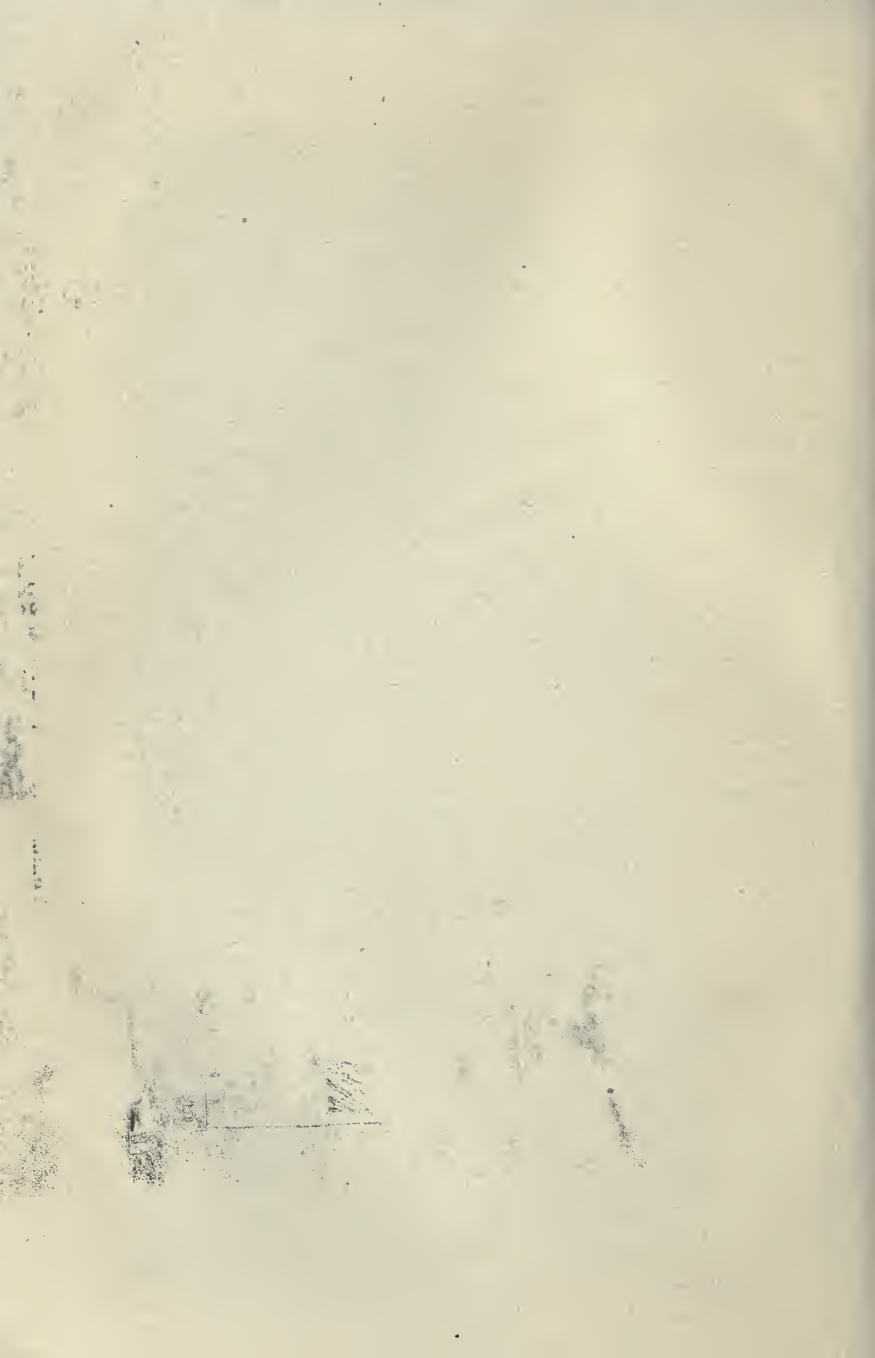
"Com. Wm. Radford,

"Comd'g in James River."





U. S. Frigate *New Ironsides*  
Commodore Radford's Flagship, 1864



"Before the fleet left Hampton Roads," writes Admiral Porter, "every care was taken that the James River, below Howlett's Battery, should be kept so perfectly guarded by a naval force that there could be no possible chance left for the Confederate ironclads to make an attack on the vessels below the obstructions sunk in the river, which consisted of several large schooners loaded with stones, sunk in the middle of the stream, and heavy booms and chains extending from the sunken vessels to either shore and secured to anchors planted in the bank.

"These obstructions were immediately under the fire of the *Onondaga*, a double-turreted Monitor, and also of a battery on shore belonging to the Army. A pontoon bridge was in place below the vessels guarding the obstructions, to enable the Army of the James to retreat across the river under cover of the gunboats, in case it was attacked by a superior force. There could be no possibility of the enemy's fleet getting past the obstructions while the Federal naval force maintained its position; but, in case it should be driven away, the Confederates could have blown up the obstruction, passed through and broken up the pontoon bridge, thus cutting off the Army on the left bank of the James from its supports, and threatening City Point, where all the stores were gathered for the use of the Army before Richmond. . . .

"As long as the *Onondaga* floated the Confederate vessels could not get down with safety, any more than the Federal ships could get up, and the only way by which the Confederates could meet with any success was for them to send down a dozen torpedo-boats, and try to destroy the double-turreted Monitor."

Commodore J. K. Mitchell was at that time in command of the Confederate naval forces on the James River, and he determined to make an attempt to pass the obstructions and break up the pontoon bridge.

Accordingly, at daybreak one morning, two of the rebel ironclads appeared around the point near Howlett's Battery and approached the obstacles, where they stopped. Commander William A. Parker, in command of the Federal naval force, had been instructed by Admiral Porter, in case the Confederate fleet should show itself below Howlett's Battery, to get under way and proceed up close to the obstructions, to hold on there and keep up his fire as long as a Confederate ironclad remained in sight. For some strange reason Commander Parker turned the head of his vessel downstream and seemed for a moment about to destroy the pontoon bridge; but, suddenly reflecting, he attempted to turn his ship in that narrow river, got aground, and knocked off the wings of one of his propellers. It would be ungenerous to criticise Parker's conduct, since it was proven afterwards that he was of unsound mind, and previous to his fiasco he had stood high in the naval service both as a brave man and an excellent officer.

The commanders of the two Confederate ironclads behaved in quite as erratic a manner as did the captain of the *Onondaga*. They came to anchor at a place called the Crow's Nest, and lay there all night, as though uncertain what to do. They doubtless wondered what had become of the *Onondaga*, when the following morning she appeared returning up the river. On seeing her, the two Confederate ironclads got under way and proceeded up towards Howlett's Battery. They did not, however, get off without some damage. When the *Onondaga* reached the obstructions Commander Parker opened fire on the retreating vessels with all his fifteen-inch guns.

One of the Confederate ironclads had just turned the point, but the rear one received a solid shot which pierced her side, inflicting some injuries to her hull, and killing and wounding several of her men. Thus ended this remarkable affair, which might have



caused serious trouble if it had been conducted with any determined dash.

After this, the obstructions were further strengthened by sinking another large schooner loaded with stones, and that was the last attempt the Confederates ever made to reach City Point with their naval force. "But the commander of the Federal vessels lost an opportunity to gather some laurels, an opportunity that never occurred again, while the Federal Navy lost a page in history which might have been chronicled as one of the brightest events of the war."

This incident, related by Admiral Porter in his "Naval History of the Civil War," explains the remarks of the Commander-in-Chief, in his last given letter.

The following report of Commodore Radford transmits a report of Lieutenant-Commander Blake.

"U. S. S. *New Ironsides*,  
off Bermuda Hundred, Jan. 28th/65.

"Sir,

"I have the honor to enclose Lt. Comdr. Blake's report.

"As soon as I arrived at this place, on the 26th inst. I took a tug and proceeded to the front, and found the *Onondaga* close to the obstructions. The *Atlanta* came up after my arrival and was anchored ahead of the *Onondaga*. The *Saugus* arrived next morning; has been anchored below the *Onondaga*. Three of the wooden vessels are anchored just out of range of the rebel battery to support the iron vessels in case of an attack. Before I arrived General Grant had ordered the breach made in the obstructions filled up with two schooners loaded with coal. We are prepared, and should they have the temerity to make another attack you will, I trust, hear a good account of us.

"Lt. Comdr. Blake I found in command of the *Onondaga*, and

have kept him in command, which I hope will meet with your approval.

"I have been constantly employed getting the vessels in their proper places.

"There are so many rumors that it requires constant vigilance to be prepared at all points.

"Very Resptly Yr. Obdt. Servt.,

"Wm. Radford,

"Comdg. 5th Division."

"R. Adml. David D. Porter,

"Comdg. North Atlantic Squadron."

A telegram to Secretary Welles dated, "Off Bermuda Hundred, Feb. 5th/65," reads: "I directed the vessels in the lower part of James River to co-operate with Gen. Graham in destroying some torpedo-boats said to be in Pagan Creek;" and another of February 7th, says: "Was at Front all day yesterday. It was reported last night at 8.30 that the enemy's fleet was coming down toward obstructions. No news of them this morning.

"Wm. Radford,

"Commodore."

On February 18th, 1865, Admiral Semmes assumed command of the Confederate fleet in the James River, relieving Commodore J. K. Mitchell. This fleet was assisted in the defense of the river by shore batteries under command of naval officers. The Confederate vessels were not in the most efficient condition as regards their *personnel*, which was mostly drawn from the Army. The real difficulty in getting to Richmond with the Federal gun-boats was in the heavy fortifications along the James River above Howlett's Battery, the sunken torpedoes, and the obstructions in the channel, which could not be removed under fire.

While the Federal and Confederate forces on the river were in this position, General Grant was gradually enveloping Richmond with his army; and Commodore Radford and the officers of his command, while at Bermuda Hundred, had many opportunities of witnessing the operations in front of Petersburg, and of noting the work of the Army in daily conflict with a brave and vigilant foe. They were lying not far from, and made almost daily visits to, City Point, where were General Grant's headquarters, consisting of a row of beautifully built log cabins.

On February 18th the *Ironsides* was sent to Norfolk for the long delayed repairs, and Commodore Radford transferred his flag to the *Dumbarton*, finding her the most suitable and convenient vessel for his purpose.

We cannot take final leave of the good ship *Ironsides* without mentioning a communication received by Admiral Porter, and forwarded by him with orders that it be read "upon the quarter deck of every vessel in this Squadron."

"Executive Mansion,

"Feb. 10th, 1865.

"Sir,

"It is my agreeable duty to enclose herewith the joint resolution approved 24th Jan., 1865, tendering the thanks of Congress to yourself, and the officers and men under your command, for their gallantry and good conduct in the capture of Fort Fisher, and through you to all who participated in that brilliant and decisive victory under your Command.

"Very Respectfully,

"Abraham Lincoln."

"R. Admiral D. D. Porter."

The enclosed Resolution was as follows:

"Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the U. S. of America in Congress assembled,

"That the thanks of Congress are hereby tendered to R. Admiral David D. Porter and to the officers, petty officers, seamen and marines under his command for the unsurpassed gallantry and skill exhibited by them in the attacks upon Fort Fisher, and the brilliant and decisive victory by which that important work has been captured from the rebel forces and placed in possession and under the authority of the United States; and for their long and faithful services and unwavering devotion to the cause of the country, in the midst of the greatest difficulties and dangers.

"Sec. 2. And be it further resolved, that the President of the United States be requested to communicate this Resolution to Admiral Porter, and through him to the officers, petty officers, seamen and marines under his command.

("Approved Jan. 24th, 1865.")

In a report to Admiral Porter dated "U. S. S. *Dumbarton*, off Aiken's Landing, Feb. 23rd/65," Commodore Radford says in part:

"In an interview I had with General Grant yesterday he informed me that he had received information from Richmond which indicated that the rebels propose making a grand attack on his intrenchments. At the same time the rebel Navy will attack us, and if successful, will get possession of the rivers, . . . I am in readiness, and have no fears of their success against us. . . ."

Constant watchfulness was required, and there were many exchanges of telegrams between commanders concerning the enemy's movements. One dated "City Point, Va., Feb. 25th/65," reads:

"I think it not impossible that the enemy may send their rams



down tonight, or during present high water. I have directed vigilance on the part of pickets. . . .

"U. S. Grant."

"To Commodore Radford,

"Comdg. James River Squadron."

Amidst these many military orders pertaining rather to a more detailed history, we find some suggestive of lighter duties, as for instance the following:

"Headquarters Department of Virginia,  
Army of the James, Before Richmond, Va.

"March 17th, 1865.

"Com. Wm. Radford,

"Comdg. Naval Forces, James River,

"Commodore,

"The Gen'l Comdg. sends you a horse with the wish that you will ride up to these Hd. Qrs. to meet the Honble. Secy. of War and witness a review which takes place today.

"I have the honor, Commodore,

"to remain Respectfully

"Your obt. servt.,

"Thomas G. Welles,

"Capt. & A. D. C."

On the morning of March 22nd, 1865, Commodore Radford left on the flagship *Dumbarton* for the Norfolk Navy Yard where he remained for three days, during the second of which the steamer *River Queen*, escorted by the *Bat* (Lt. Comdr. John S. Barnes), passed up the James River conveying President and Mrs. Lincoln to City Point, where they were to visit General Grant.

Leaving Norfolk on March 25th, the *Dumbarton* anchored the

following day off the Washington Navy Yard, when the officers were detached and the ship "turned over to the army," while Commodore Radford left on a short leave of absence for Morristown.

In my grandfather's diary, already frequently referred to, is the entry under date of April 22nd, 1865: "The Commodore was here lately on a ten days' leave, which he, we, and the children enjoyed very much." And again in a letter of that period, Mr. Lovell writes: "Mrs. Radford is very well and so are her dear children, embracing 'young Ironsides'—the newcomer—born almost amid the smoke and roar of the cannon of Fort Fisher, where his father lay in the forefront of the battle in his good ship the *New Ironsides*, without receiving a hurt to any one of the crew during that tremendous, very extraordinary and most decisive conflict of the war."

The "newcomer" here mentioned was born on December 27th, 1865, and being a fine and sturdy specimen of boyhood, was instantly yclept by our Rector, Mr. Merritt, who was an Englishman, Edmund Ironsides.

Although my mother never countenanced the giving of this name to the child, it was taken up enthusiastically by every one, even including my grandfather, and when my father arrived for the baptism, which had been deferred until his coming, he eagerly concurred with the suggestion, and so "Edmund Ironsides," the boy who had come into the world during the interim between the two great battles of Fort Fisher, was christened amidst great family rejoicing.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE NORTH ATLANTIC SQUADRON

WHEN General Lee surrendered at Appomattox the work of the North Atlantic Squadron was over in so far as fighting was concerned, for all the James River region was in the hands of the Federals. Up to that time the squadron in Trent's Reach was quietly holding the Confederate ironclads under command of Rear Admiral Raphael Semmes, above Drury's Bluff, where they were quite harmless and would either have to be blown up or surrendered.

The Confederate lines in the vicinity of Petersburg having been weakened by the necessity of withdrawing troops to defend Lee's extreme right at Five Forks, General Grant, on the morning of the 2nd of April, ordered a vigorous assault to be made on the enemy, which gave the Federals possession of Petersburg, and rendered Richmond no longer tenable.

On the night following this success, President Lincoln went on board the flagship *Malvern*, as the guest of Admiral Porter. On every hand was heard the sound of artillery and musketry, showing that the Federals were closing in on the Confederate lines.

As the President and Admiral Porter were seated on the upper deck of the flagship, the President remarked: "Can't the Navy do something at this particular moment to make history?" The Admiral replied: "The Navy is doing its best just now, holding the enemy's four heavy ironclads in utter uselessness. If those vessels could reach City Point they would commit great havoc—as

they came near doing while I was away at Fort Fisher. In consequence, General Grant ordered the channel to be still further obstructed with stones, so that no vessel can pass. We can hold the fort with a very small force and prevent any one from removing the obstructions. Therefore, the enemy's ironclads are useless."

"But can't we make a noise?" asked the President. "Yes," replied the Admiral, "and if you desire it I will commence."

The Admiral telegraphed to Lieutenant-Commander K. R. Breese, Fleet Captain, who was just above Dutch Gap, to have the vessels' guns loaded with shrapnel, to point in the direction of the forts, and to keep up a rapid fire until directed to stop. The firing commenced about eleven o'clock P.M., and the President listened attentively while the flashes of the guns lighted up the horizon. In about twenty minutes a loud explosion shook the flagship and the President exclaimed: "I hope to Heaven one of our vessels has not blown up!" The Admiral assured him that the explosion was much further up the river and that it was doubtless one of the Confederate ironclads. A second explosion soon followed, and not long after two more, which caused the Admiral to remark: "That's all of them; no doubt the forts are evacuated and tomorrow we can go up to Richmond."

The Confederate version of the story states that as Admiral Semmes was sitting down to his dinner on board his flagship, about 4 o'clock on the 2nd of April (the day Grant had broken through Lee's lines), a special messenger brought him a letter from the Confederate Secretary of the Navy, in which were the words, "Unless otherwise directed by General Lee, upon you is devolved the duty of destroying your ships this night, and with all the forces under your command joining General Lee."

Semmes had originally intended sinking his vessels quietly, so that the Federals would have no idea of what was going on;



but soon after dark he saw the whole horizon to the north of the James lighted up, rendering concealment on his part no longer necessary. The officers and men were put on board the small gunboats, and at about midnight the ironclads blew up, one after another, with a terrific explosion, adding to the grandeur of the scene, as the barracks were already in flames. The shells bursting as the fire came in contact with them, the signal rockets from both sides filling the air like thousands of shooting stars; the booming of guns in the distance, the long roll of the drums calling the troops to fall in, mingled with the sound of trumpets, all combined to make a spectacle and an uproar as though pandemonium had broken loose. It seemed as if heaven and earth had united to celebrate the conclusion of a struggle that had caused so much suffering.

That was the end of the Confederate Navy, which went up in what might have been considered a blaze of glory, but for the fact that the James River fleet had been the most useless force the Confederates had ever put afloat—the forts, torpedoes, and obstructions on the river being far more formidable adversaries, and quite sufficient, if properly managed, to keep any hostile vessels from ascending the narrow channel, where, if one should happen to be sunk, it would effectually bar the progress of those behind it.

Those who for many months had guarded the obstructions in the river rejoiced when the monotonous task was concluded. If rockets were sent up, and national salutes fired, the demonstration was as much on account of the return of peace as in honor of victory. It signalized the end of that fraternal strife between people who could never live apart, but who, united under one government, could bid defiance to the world in arms.

“Whether our country will profit as much as it should from past experience remains to be seen,” writes Admiral Porter, “but,

so far, we have not given much evidence of progress in matters pertaining to the defense of our coasts and the construction of a navy adequate to protect the nation from foreign and domestic enemies, which latter exist in every country, no matter how beneficent may be its laws."

When the channel was reported clear of torpedoes Admiral Porter proceeded up towards Richmond in the *Malvern*, preceded by the *Bat*, with President Lincoln following on board the *River Queen*. Finally, the *Malvern* grounded below the city, and the Admiral, taking the President in his barge and accompanied by a tug with a file of marines, continued on to Richmond. About a mile below the landing, the tug was permitted to go to the relief of a party in a small steamer who were caught under a bridge and held by the current, and the barge proceeded alone. The street along the river front was deserted, and, although the Federal troops had been in possession of the city some hours, not a soldier was to be seen. A dozen negroes who were digging nearby with spades, seeing the President, joined hands and commenced to sing a hymn, to which the President listened respectfully. Before it was finished the street seemed suddenly alive with the colored race, and the crowd around the President becoming oppressive, it was necessary to order the boat's crew to fix bayonets and surround him to keep him from being crushed. The negroes, in their ecstasy, could not be made to understand that they were detaining the President, and would not feel that they were free unless they heard it from his own lips. Mr. Lincoln, therefore, made a few remarks, assuring them they were free and giving them good advice, after which the party managed to move slowly on to the city.

The sidewalks were lined with people, white and black, but there was no anger on any face. At one point a beautiful girl struggled through the crowd and presented Mr. Lincoln with a

bouquet of roses. There was no cheering at this, nor any evidence of disapprobation, but the girl was surrounded and plied with questions on returning to the sidewalk.

At the moment when President Lincoln entered the city the majority of the Federal troops were engaged in putting out the fires that had been started by the Confederates as they left the place.

At length a cavalryman was encountered, and the Admiral sent him to inform the General-in-command of the arrival of the President, and to request a military escort. A troop of cavalry arrived promptly, the streets were cleared, and the President soon reached the mansion just vacated by Mr. Davis, and now the headquarters of Generals Weitzel and Shepley. It was a modest house, comfortably but plainly furnished.

A great crowd of civilians assembled around the house, greeting the President with loud cheers. General Shepley made a speech, after which the President and party entered a carriage and visited the State House, the late seat of the Confederate Congress.

After this Admiral Porter urged the President to go on board the *Malvern*, as he began to feel the responsibility resting on him for the care of his person. In fact, the Admiral was oppressed with uneasiness until he once more stood with Mr. Lincoln on the deck of the flagship, and he determined the President should go nowhere again, while under his charge, without a guard of marines.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Lincoln did not go again to Richmond. On Wednesday morning, April 5th, the President with the Admiral started down the river in the barge, the tug again taking them in tow, and arriving at Dutch Gap they rejoined the *River Queen*. The *Bat*, which had remained at anchor at Fort Darling, took up her place

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviated from Admiral Porter's "Naval History of the Civil War."



as convoy, and at half-past three the President's vessel was again lying at anchor at City Point.

Early the following morning the *Malvern* came down to City Point, and the President again took up his quarters on board. Mrs. Lincoln (who had returned to Washington on April 1st, leaving with the President only his young son "Tad" and Captain Penrose, his aide), came back again from Washington on the morning of April 6th, with the Secretary of the Interior, the Attorney-General, and Senator Sumner. "They were transferred to the *River Queen*, which took them up to Richmond, the President remaining with Porter on board the *Malvern*. Here he passed two days."<sup>1</sup>

On April 4th, the very day upon which President Lincoln, accompanied by Admiral Porter, Captain Adams of the Navy, Captain Penrose (the President's aide), and Lieutenant Clemmens of the Army (Porter's signal officer), entered Richmond, Commodore Radford hoisted his flag on board the U. S. S. *Phlox*, at the Washington Navy Yard, and leaving there steamed down the Potomac and up the James River, stopping at 3 P.M. the following day to take on board Lieutenant-Commander Selfridge from the U. S. S. *Huron*, from whom the Commodore received the latest news of the great events that had transpired during his absence.

At 8.30 P.M. on April 5th, the *Phlox* came to anchor off City Point. The following morning at 9.30, Commodore Radford went on board the flagship *Malvern*, returning at 1.30. No sooner had he come aboard than the *Phlox* got under way and steamed up the James River, anchoring at 6.45 P.M. alongside the wharf at Richmond.

While stopping at City Point Commodore Radford had taken on board the *Phlox* as his guest Vice-President Johnson, for whom, although a member of the Presidential visiting party, no quarters

<sup>1</sup> James Russell Soley: "Life of Admiral Porter."



had been provided. Whatever may have been the reason of his coming aboard the *Phlox*—(it was said that Mrs. Lincoln did not like the Vice-President and consequently did not wish him with their party)—certain it is that Mr. Johnson, when President of the United States, showed, whenever occasion offered, his appreciation of the courtesy thus extended.

For two days the *Phlox* lay at Richmond, and while there Commodore Radford discovered his stepbrother Meriwether Lewis Clark among the Confederate prisoners whose release had not yet been effected. He proceeded at once to take steps for his liberation, when, to his amazement, he found that Colonel Clark declined to accept this at his hands. Seeing that he could otherwise be of no aid to his stepbrother, Commodore Radford obtained permission to have him taken aboard the *Phlox* as a prisoner of war; knowing that there at least he could be made physically comfortable; and there—willingly or unwillingly—he remained until his release was procured.

Another incident of that same visit to Richmond showed a feeling among the young ladies of the city somewhat different from that displayed by the one who had presented the bouquet to Mr. Lincoln. As the Commodore, accompanied by an officer of his staff, was walking along one of the streets, they met a young woman who, as she passed, turned her head away from them in most pointed fashion. Unused to such treatment from the young girls of his native state, Radford said in a loud tone to his companion: "You may know that one is not very good-looking, or she would never have done that."

Instantly the young woman faced about—a beauty if ever there was one—and as the two officers in the hated uniform lifted their caps, she, after one desperate effort to crush them with a glance, completely lost her composure and they all began to laugh.

In the log of the *Phlox* under date, "April 8th, 1865," occurs the following entry: "At 9.30 A.M. left Richmond and steamed down the James River with the Vice-President on board"; and the following letter of later date shows that Senator King, of New York, was also a guest of Commodore Radford's at that time.

"New York City, Aug. 29th, 1865.

"Wm. Radford,

"Acting Rear Admiral.

"Dear Sir,

"Your letter of Aug. 14th, went to Ogdensburg, N. Y. & has found me here. I regret that I cannot present it in person to the President. I enclosed your letter and Mr. Mumford's in a letter to the President reminding him of our very pleasant voyage from Richmond to Norfolk, and the favorable impression you then made, and asking attention to your wishes.

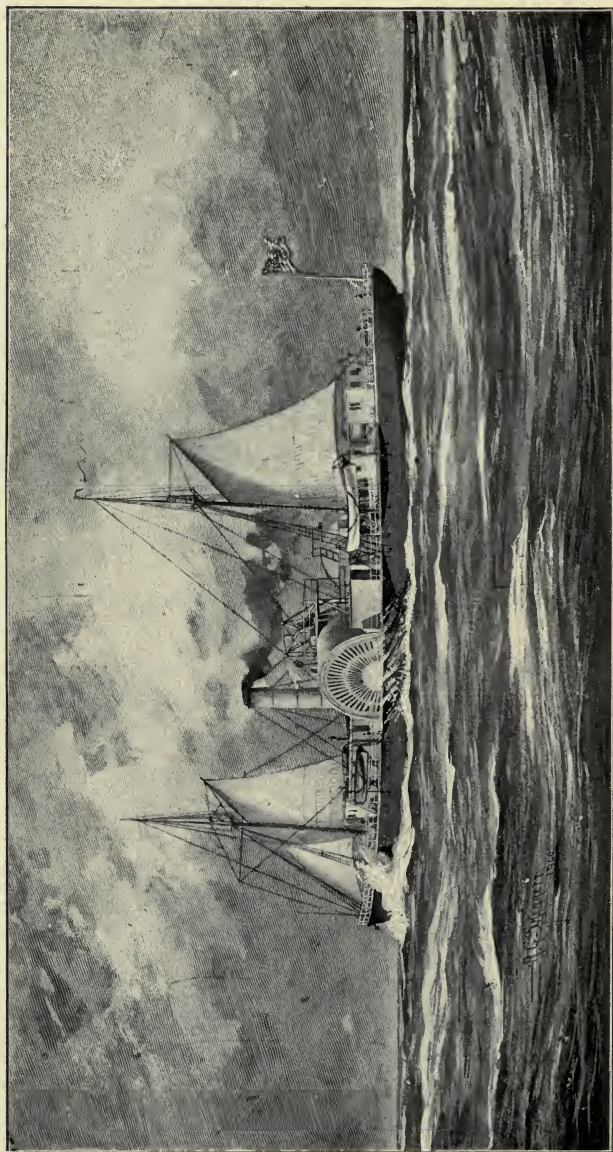
"Very Respectfully,

"Preston King."

So far as I have been able to discover, there exists no official record of Vice-President Johnson's having visited Richmond and the James River at that time, other than that of the above entry on the log of the *Phlox*, and therefore it and Senator King's letter are not without a certain historical value.

While the *Phlox*, on April 8th, was steaming down the James, the *River Queen*, with Mrs. Lincoln and party on board was also proceeding down the river.

Reaching City Point at 1 P.M. Commodore Radford there went on board the flagship to visit Admiral Porter, after which the *Phlox* continued her way down the river and at 11 P.M. went into dock at Norfolk. Here they lay until the morning of the 10th, coaling ship, and at 7.30 A.M. of that date steamed down towards Fortress Monroe and came to anchor in the Roads.



U. S. S. *Malvern*  
Flagship of the North Atlantic Squadron





"On Saturday evening, April 8th, the President left City Point in the *River Queen* with the *Bat* in company, and proceeded down the river, arriving at Washington on Sunday night, and finding there the news awaiting him that Lee had surrendered."

"On the 9th of April, 1865, at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, General Lee met General Grant, and surrendered all that was left of the once invincible army of Northern Virginia. The Union soldiers treated their former enemies like brothers, dividing their rations with them, and for the first time in weeks the gaunt, famishing boys in gray learned what it was to eat a full meal of wholesome food. Grant gave generous terms to Lee, not even asking for his sword. On April 26th General Johnston surrendered to General Sherman on the same terms that Lee had received. Before the close of May all the scattered forces of the Confederacy had submitted, and the war for the Union was over."

On April 12th, Commodore Radford was placed in temporary command of the North Atlantic Squadron.

Moving constantly up and down the river, the *Phlox* cast off from Aiken's Landing at 6 A.M. on April 16th, and as she proceeded down the stream, Commodore Radford, standing on the quarter-deck, received at 10 A.M. from a passing steamer, news of the assassination of President Lincoln.

Unwilling to believe that so great a catastrophe had actually occurred, the Commodore asked that the message be repeated, when a rough-looking fellow who was leaning lazily over the railing of the steamer, put both hands to his mouth in trumpet fashion and roared: "Lincoln's gone up."

Commodore Radford always affirmed that, "Had he had a pistol at hand he would certainly have shot that man."

The following order issued April 16th, 1865, was received by the Commander of the North Atlantic Squadron:

"To prevent the escape of the assassin who killed the President and attempted the life of the Secretary of state, search every vessel that arrives down the bay. Permit no vessel to go to sea without such search, and arrest and send to Washington any suspicious persons. Gideon Welles."

In a letter from his half-brother, Mr. Jefferson Clark, dated "St. Louis, Aprl. 9th/65," we read in part:

"Dear Brother,

"I have waited patiently for a long time for an answer to my last, but supposed that your entire time was occupied in the management of your *Ironsides*; but now that you have shed those sides I thought you might be induced to answer this. Sue (Mrs. J. K. Clark) hears from your *better half* occasionally, for surely, if it depended on you alone we would scarcely know how the family in New Jersey was getting along. . . .

"I was highly gratified to see that you were honorably mentioned by the Admiral, and highly decorated by the reporters in the attack on Fort Fisher; and that you were able to accomplish that which Gen. Butler had pronounced to be impracticable. . . . I see there was not a man hurt on the *Ironsides*. This is about the only fight I watched with interest, and when I saw that the *Ironsides* was the first to open the ball I trembled with fear lest further down I should read that she had been the first by a ball to be opened! But am glad that you came off unscathed and filled with GLORY. . . . We don't have any excitement of that kind out here. On the dry sod my ship is the plow to whose handle every man has to come, for in these times of conventions and war servants are not to be had for love or money. Sue's girls have left her, and my man says there are not greenbacks enough in the State of Missouri to make him get up the carriage today.

"Your ever affectionate Bro. J. K. C."

On April 28th, 1865, Commodore Radford received the following order: "You are hereby appointed to command the North Atlantic Squadron, and will hoist your flag as Acting Rear Admiral.

"Very resply,

"Gideon Welles."

"A. Rear Adml.

"Wm. Radford."

On May 15th, 1865, Acting Rear Admiral Radford therefore transferred his flag from the *Phlox* to the *Malvern*, which remained his flagship during the period of his command.

A letter from Senator King has already been given, and the following from Admiral Radford's cousin, George Wythe Munford, shows the sequel to the matter mentioned therein.

"Richmond, Sept. 17th/65.

"Dear William,

"I received last night your kind letter of the 14th instant, & am just as much obliged to you as if you had obtained my pardon for me. I had received your former letter saying you had written to Mr. Preston King on the subject, but after waiting for some time without hearing that my papers were advanced at all, I took it into my head that a personal application would succeed, and so without introduction or letters from any one I proceeded direct to Washington, introduced myself to Mr. Seward, the Secretary of State, told him who I was, what offices I had filled in Virginia, & asked him to obtain for me an audience with the President, which, though a total stranger, he did, & I had a private interview with the President for half an hour, & came off with the pardon in my possession, having been treated respectfully and kindly by both. This was very important for me, for my property had been libeled & I could not sell or

make any arrangements for a future support, & I was fast eating up all that remained of a once comfortable income.

"I have now succeeded in selling my house & lot here for \$20,000, & have leased for four years one of the most beautiful farms & handsomest buildings in all Virginia. It is located on the North River, in the County of Gloucester, near its mouth, where it empties into Mobjack Bay. It is a farm formerly owned by Mr. Prosser Tabb, in a beautiful & delightful neighborhood. In your various peregrinations along the Virginia Coast you may have seen it. It is a place called 'Elmington,' not far from Todbury. . . . You will be compelled from old associations & friendships to come & see it, & me & mine. And we shall be truly delighted if you will bring your good wife along, & stay a good while. There are fish, oysters & crabs enough to give you a bountiful repast, if we cannot find anything else. I shall have a small supply too of old whisky. The house has twenty odd rooms in it, so there will be room enough to spare. My family will move down between the tenth of October and first of November. So you see in my old age I am going to try a farmer's life. I shall find it necessary to learn enough of a sailor's life to manage a small sail boat, merely for fishing, & little pleasure excursions for self and the girls. By the way, where can I purchase a neat little sail-boat for four persons, & what will it cost? The Government has plenty of old wagons & horses for sale here, have they any old boats, that are not *very* old, at Old Point? My wife & daughters are pleased at the prospect of going to the country to live, & I desire to make it a pleasure to them. My own taste has always impelled me to desire a farmer's life. I am sick of politics & of public positions." (He held that of Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia, before the war.) "All I crave now is the calm of retirement; but I am going to 'Hang up



the fiddle & the bow, & Take up the shovel & the hoe,' . . .  
'Poor old Ned is going where the good niggers go.'

"My wife & all my big & little children are staying with my son Thom, at his place in Bedford County, & seem to be enjoying themselves very much there. . . . Thom is an applicant for pardon, & will find it necessary to go on to Washington in a short time. Having been a Colonel commanding a Cavalry Regiment during the whole war & having received the appointment as Brigadier-General just before its termination, I fear he will have more difficulty than I had.

"Should you be in Washington & can give him a lift I know you will do it.

"God bless you & preserve you in health & happiness is sincere prayer of

"Your Affect. cousin,

"George W. Munford."

"Admiral Wm. Radford,

"U. S. Flagship *Malvern*,

"Fortress Monroe."

An order dated, "Navy Department, Washington, Sept. 25th, 1865," reads: "On the reporting of your relief, Commodore Joseph Lanman, on the 10th of Oct. next, you will regard yourself as detached from the command of the Atlantic Squadron, and you will proceed to Washington, D. C., by the 13th of October next, and report to Commodore J. B. Montgomery, on that day, for the command of the Navy Yard, Washington.

"Respectfully,

"G. Welles,

"Secretary of the Navy."

"Acting Rear Admiral

"Wm. Radford,

"Comdg. Atlantic Squadron."

Amongst letters from different officers expressive of regret at Admiral Radford's leaving the North Atlantic Squadron, I insert the following:

" U. S. S. *New Hampshire*,

" Port Royal, Oct. 1st./65.

" My dear Sir,

" I have written many unpleasant letters, and copied some, but few have caused me more regret than the present. I had hoped you would be here as long as I was. If this new command is your desire, I am glad you have it, but the loss is to the regret of many and to none more than

" Yours truly,

" R. L. Law."

(Lieut. Commander, Comd'g.)

" R. Admiral Wm. Radford."

## CHAPTER XX

### THE WASHINGTON NAVY YARD

REPORTING on October 13th, 1865, for the command of the Washington Navy Yard, Commodore Radford was there joined a few weeks later by his family.

An article published in a Washington paper at that time reads in part: "Commodore Radford brings to his new command the reputation of an efficient, dignified officer, who understands well the character, intelligence and value of our American mechanics, with many of whom he will in some degree have daily intercourse.

"We are gratified to notice the favorable auspices under which Commodore R. enters upon his new duties. The new and spacious buildings, which will prove so beneficial to the station, are nearly completed; the extension to the immense copper-rolling mill is progressing. Improvements to every part of the premises are perceptible, and surely for excellence of arrangement, general utility and comfort . . . the Washington Navy Yard has no equal in this or any other country."

Then follows a list of names of master workmen, concluding with the words: "There are at present about twelve hundred men employed in the Navy Yard; they represent many of the States of the Union and are considered here, with very few exceptions as A. No. 1."

Despite this apparently flourishing state of affairs Commodore Radford writes to Rear Admiral Paulding on December 19th, 1865: "How I would like to have a few days quiet and rest,

where none would be applying for places, and all children and mothers would have plenty, without insisting upon my employing their fathers and husbands when I have no employment to give. . . .

"We are going on pretty much as when you left. Mary and I miss you very much. Capt. Meade was in my office yesterday and said you had the refusal of the Naval Asylum.

"We expect Minnie and her grandparents." (My sister was coming from boarding school for the Christmas holidays.) "I should be pleased were it in my power to serve you in any way, consequently you may safely trust any little messages to any big men, and I will promise to deliver them safely."

Another letter of February 19th, 1866, says: "There is a bill before the lower house of Congress which they say will pass that body. It is to abolish admirals on the active list in time of peace, that is to say, no more admirals are to be made than those already holding commissions, and when they die they do not create a vacancy. It also takes in some of the volunteer officers on the regular list. It is supposed by many that the pay will be slightly increased. . . .

"Admiral Smith still keeps his health, I am glad to say, and one eye open for the interest of the Government. Fox, you know, leaves the Navy Dept." (Gustavus Vasa Fox, Assistant Secretary of the Navy), "and it is said Faxon takes his place. I have no doubt but that such will be the arrangement . . ."

In still another letter from the same to the same, dated March 8th, 1866, we read, "Going to the Dept. some four days since I stopped in the State Dept. and found they knew nothing of our, or *my* papers relative to the compliment tendered by the King of Italy." (This matter had been lying by for a period of two years.) "Now the Decoration of the Order of Sts. Maurizio & Lazzaro may be a slight one, but as it is the only *visible* compli-



ment that has been offered me during the war, I made a copy of the originals and sent them to the State Dept. with the request that the proper steps might be taken with Congress, etc. But as the Order is an equestrian one, perhaps Congress might think that they would have to purchase me a pair of spurs, and consequently regret it unless I promised to purchase the decoration for the boots myself. However, you know now what I have done, and should you wish to obtain the same honors you will have to send your papers to the Secretary of State. . . .

"There is no naval news and nothing being done for the Navy just now either in the way of promotion or increased pay. The veto seems to have stopped everything just now except speech-making. . . ."

From the same to the same:

"Washington, Mar. 16th/66.

"I received your long and agreeable letter two days since and also the enclosed communication for Mr. Seward, which I enclosed immediately to Mr. Hunter, Chief Clerk State Dept. and received a reply saying he would immediately put your papers in the same channel in which mine have been placed, and I suppose you will soon have the permission to accept the spurs offered by the King of Italy. I am very glad you have concluded to take the Asylum, because I think it the most desirable situation in the Navy in time of peace, and you worked hard enough during the war to have a quiet place now. . . ."

The following resolution was passed by Congress, and approved, April 13th, 1866:

"Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives, etc., etc.

"That the assent of Congress be, and the same is hereby, given to Commodore William Radford, of the Navy of the United

States, to accept the decoration of the Equestrian Order of Saint Maurice, bestowed upon him by the King of Italy, as a reward for the assistance rendered by him to the Italian frigate *Ré d'Italia*, when she got ashore near Long Branch.

“Department of State, Washington, April 16th, 1866.”

“A true copy,

“U. Hunter, Chief Clerk.”

I do not know for what reason Congress omitted the name of St. Lazarus, who, according to my father, appeared “peculiarly fitted to be the patron saint of a Naval officer.”

After the passage of this bill there was some delay about the presentation of the decoration, and, in a letter of July 18th, 1866, Commodore Radford writes to Admiral Paulding: “I received your kind letter of the 15th inst. this morning, and as the thermometer has come down to 94° in my office, from 100°, where it has been for several days, I must thank you now for writing me during the ‘heated term.’”

Then, after some amusing remarks concerning the non-reception of the order, the letter continues: “This is enough about our Italian business—but I could not help being glad when I saw the Austrians were defeated. I have always had a little spite against them. Congress will leave in a few days for a cooler clime. . . .”

On July 25th, 1866, Commodore Radford was promoted to Rear Admiral, and in August he received the following letter, which of course was a command:

“Washington, 24th, Aug., 1866.

“My dear Admiral,

“The President desires me to invite yourself and Mrs. Radford to join his party in the proposed excursion to Chicago, which will leave Washington on Tuesday next.

"Please inform me if you can make it convenient to join us. Admiral and Mrs. Farragut will be of the party.

"Very Respectfully,  
"Gideon Welles."

"R. Admiral Wm. Radford."

President Johnson being at that time at variance with Congress as to the conditions upon which the late seceding States should be allowed to return to the Union, vetoed bill after bill only to have Congress pass them over his veto. In August, 1866, the President attended by members of his cabinet and a few invited guests, made a tour through some of the Northern and Western States, denouncing the action of Congress as rebellious and appealing to the people to support him.

A letter from Admiral Paulding dated, "Naval Asylum, Philadelphia, Nov. 2nd/66," reads:

"I have waited a long time to hear from you and have wondered why you did not write, but at last know you went off on an excursion, and when I heard you had got to making speeches—having had some experience of that kind—I was quite in despair . . . I feared from the position and the party I had little chance of being remembered. We are very comfortable here. The old gentlemen give but little trouble; some of them have an infirmity and we occasionally have to put them in the cells when they are noisy. . . .

"I wish you would tell me if you have yet received your knighthood? Be pleased to present me to dear Mrs. Radford, to dear Misses M. and S. and the boys, and I send my salutations to 'Ironsides,' whose name was so nobly won that I trust the occasion and the gallant gentleman who fought the ship will never be forgotten. . . ."

The cause of the delay in the sending of the Italian dec-

orations is explained in Admiral Radford's answer to this letter.

He writes on November 28th, 1866: "I have received my decoration, and Cantagalli, Chargé d'Affaires and Minister ad interim, informed me that he would send yours immediately. He would have sent it at the same time he sent mine, but having been considerably 'ruffled' by the poet Longfellow he was rather shy of sending any more decorations until application had been made for them, only informing the individual that such an honor was in store and ready to be given when an expression of willingness to receive was forthcoming."

(Longfellow sent the King of Italy a handsome copy of his works, and the King in return thanked him by sending a decoration, which he had the bad taste to refuse on the ground that the King was a Catholic, and he, Longfellow, a Protestant and Republican.)

"Mrs. Radford has translated the commission and laws of the Order, and is delighted to find one of the clauses prohibits a second marriage after having become a member of the order.

"We are getting along very much after last year's style except that my gardener has been taken away.

"Uncle Jo" (Rear Admiral Jos. Smith, Chief of Yards and Docks from May 24th, 1846, to April 31st, 1869), "is getting up new regulations for yards. I sent him up the old book of orders which has been used in the yard for many years, that, with the blue book, I think will occupy his spare time for many months."

On December 12th, 1866, Admiral Paulding writes: "Yesterday a handsome young fellow filling the office of Italian Consul drove to the asylum with a package to my address that he had been instructed to deliver in my hands. This proved to be the 'veritable commission and decoration' of Sts. Maurice and Lazaro.



"It is quite as neat an affair as I looked for, and as much as the occasion seems to call for, and being entirely indebted to you for its reception, if it were really of less value, I am bound again to thank you most heartily for your kind and friendly interest in this and all else where your highly valued friendship could be made apparent. . . . I wish, in the absence of pressing duties, you would tell me something about your agreeable summer's pastime; the excursion you made, with any prominent incidents on the way. You have been so reticent on this subject that I fear it did not interest you as much as your friends could have desired. I sometimes throw out a hint to my friend Uncle Jo that I should like to know what *he* thinks of public affairs, but the most I can get out of him is that he 'keeps his ship on an even keel.'

"Be pleased to present me kindly to my esteemed friend Mrs. Radford, to Minnie and the rest of the dear children."

A terrible blow befell my father when, on December 16th, 1866, the *New Ironsides*, at anchor off League Island, suddenly sank at her moorings. Whether this was an accident or the result of foul play was never strictly ascertained, but my father took the matter almost as greatly to heart as he could have done had some mishap befallen a member of his family.

Here is one more letter of those written by Admiral Radford while at the Washington Navy Yard to Admiral Paulding. The date is January 14th, 1867. "I should have written you long since and congratulated you upon the reception of that 'veritable commission' from his Majesty the King of Italy, but for the illness of my chief clerk, and I am now afraid he will never be well again, having had a paralysis. . . . You speak of my not writing about the Chicago, or Western trip. I thought the papers had lied enough about that 'Circle' to have satisfied the entire Country individually and collectively. 'Uncle Jo' is too sharp ever to be

caught expressing himself on paper . . . had he done so he would not now be the Chief of a Bureau, I take it.

"The *Herald* thinks next Congress will impeach the President.

"I *don't* think so; though we are living still in troublesome times, and I don't think much of politicians. It would take a better prophet than your friend to say what they would or would not do!

"We are getting on very much as when you were here. I have hired a man to look out for my garden, but feel very much the loss of the experienced one who had been employed by the Government for many years or will feel it next summer if here.

"Mrs. Radford joins me in love to you and yours."

In order to show that the cordial and affectionate relations existing between my father and his cousin G. W. Munford remained ever unchanged by the war as well as because they are typical of that period, the following letters are given:

"Elmington, Gloucester, Va.

"March 1st/67.

"Dear William,

"It gives me pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter of the 19th ultimo, because it proves to me that you have still your old friendly feelings & the remembrance of old times and kindred. I can never forget the happy days we spent together in former years, both at my mother's" (Sarah Radford) "and at Uncle William's" (William Radford II) "& the many scenes of pleasantry we passed at the latter's, when you would be surrounded by the girls who were then so gay & cheerful, and who used to take such pleasure in cheering, or *chairing* you up, as they called it. I can hardly realize the fact of the many years that have passed since that time, & of the changes that have taken place in the family circles, & in friendly groups, &

above all in the political world. I have become a rusticated old farmer, toiling in my old age at plow & hoe, & you an Admiral in the Navy of a mighty nation! Notwithstanding all these things my heart clings to old friends, & none would receive a warmer welcome than would you & your wife in my home.

“When I first moved here & found the necessity I should have for a sailing boat, I wrote to you in unreserved friendship, inquiring if you knew where I could purchase a sail-boat, not intending to hint for you to send me one as a present. I could not get a suitable one at the time, & had to put up with a common canoe or dugout. This has answered my purpose as a boat for oystering & fishing, & with the aid of an old freedman I have been furnished a full supply of the best oysters I have ever seen. In your kindness, however, you say that you have a very nice boat, oars, sails, etc., which you wish to send me. I make you a very profound bow & return you my sincere thanks. I only regret the trouble it may occasion you in getting it here, but we are not in such a secluded spot as you imagine. In former days, before the war, a regular steamer came up the river (North River) with the United States mail to Todbury three times a week, & passed immediately by the place to a landing not three quarters of a mile off. The farms having been all seriously damaged & but little crops made yet, the boat has been discontinued, but, as the farmers are regaining their industry & their farms are improving, we shall have crops to send to market & the steamer will probably resume her trips. If you will look on your charts of the Coast Survey in the counties of Gloucester & Mathews, you will find that the Severn, Ware, North and East Rivers form Mobjack Bay, & almost all the farms of note on these rivers are laid down. I am living on North River near its mouth, about three miles from Mobjack Bay. For the present our outlet by steamer is near the mouth of East River. The

steamer *Eolus* is running tri-weekly from Norfolk, on Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays—touches in coming & going at Old Point and lands passengers for this place, or freight, at Hicks wharf on East River in Mathews County. Captain McCarrick is her commander, & will bring anything for me & have it landed at that wharf. If you will direct the boat to his care in Norfolk I shall get it, I doubt not. If you will let me know at any time when you & your wife will pay us a visit I will send a carriage to meet you & bring you here where I promise you a hearty welcome. My wife sends best regards to your wife. With best wishes for your health & happiness I am your sincere friend and cousin,

“George W. Munford.”

Another letter from the same to the same, dated, “April 17th/67,” reads: “Your kind letter of the 8th instant & handsome present have been received. The letter, on account of its evident friendly feeling, as much prized as the present, & the latter as much valued as possible. The boat has been admired by all who have seen it, & my children have made all the fuss over it imaginable. I have had her duly christened, & looking to the feelings of our youth again revived, I have named her ‘The Light of Other Days.’ Happy & better times for the South & for old Virginia will come around yet, & then I hope, as slavery is dead forever, there will be no bone of contention between the two sections.

“I am a poor sailor myself & know but little of managing a sail-boat, & fear if I should attempt it without aid, I should ‘be spilled,’ as you suggest, but some of my neighbors are very skillful & with their assistance we shall be able to manage her for fishing and pleasure excursions in good weather.”



## CHAPTER XXI

### GLIMPSES OF SOCIAL LIFE AT THE WASHINGTON YARD

VERY happy indeed were those days at the Washington Navy Yard. Although at the time of our arrival there I was but in my eleventh year, I perhaps saw more of the world than usually falls to the lot of a girl of that age. The first winter in Washington ended, my sister left her New York boarding school, and together we attended Madame Burr's school in Washington, beside having Mlle. Victorine Prudhomme, who is remembered with affection by many in Washington, as our governess at home.

General Zeilin, who had been stationed at the Brooklyn Marine Barracks when we were at the Navy Yard there, was now Commandant of the Marine Corps, and his two daughters were of the same ages as my sister and myself. I hardly think I should be overstating the fact in saying that there were few, if any, festivities given at either the Navy Yard or Marine Headquarters at which we were not, despite our ages, all four present.

Excursions were at that time frequently organized to the American Mecca—Mount Vernon—in honor of distinguished guests, of whom there was a constant succession, and on many of these we were allowed to go. Furthermore, President Johnson's daughters, Mrs. Patterson and Mrs. Stover, arranged many parties for their children, to go down the river in the *Ascutney* and later in the *Tallapoosa*; and in these we young people were invariably included, as we were in the childrens' parties given at the White House. Secre-

tary and Mrs. Welles also gave numerous river parties, inviting always hosts of young people, friends of their son Edgar, and among these my sister and Miss Zeilin were always numbered. (It is disclosing no great secret to say that it was invariably my mother who provided the luncheons for these river parties.)

Among the many foreign guests who were entertained during that time, Queen Emma and her Hawaiian suite appear to have especially impressed me, although far greater interest was attached to the visit of Madame Ristori, who, with a numerous company lunched at our house before continuing their way down the river.

My father's favorite relaxation during the autumn days at the Washington Yard was the shooting on the Anacostia, or eastern branch of the Potomac River. For this purpose he had had built a small flat-bottomed skiff with one high seat, like a piano stool, from whence he shot, while an experienced boatman rowed or shoved the small craft through the long river grasses. I remember his returning from one of those early morning excursions bringing a round hundred of reed birds and ortolan with him. Today reed birds and ortolan have vanished along with the flats and river grasses from the Potomac, and while the sanitary condition of the city has, of course, improved, the old picturesqueness of the river is no more.

During the winter of 1867-68, my sister made her "official" entrance into society, or, to use the accepted phrase, "came out"; and I, although but thirteen at the time, was present at the various home entertainments given in honor of that event. I can see before me now the long old-fashioned parlors in which was the dancing, with the many lovely young girls in their tulle and tarlatan dresses, who are today—or numbers of them at least—mothers, and even grandmothers of the brave boys who have lately been fighting on the battlefields of France.

As I remember there were some rarely lovely women and

young girls in Washington during those years; not meaning in any way however disparagement to those of later times. There was General Butler's daughter, Mrs. Ames, who, when she appeared with her father, always evoked the comment: "Beauty and the Beast!" Chief Justice Chase's daughter, Mrs. Sprague, who was hostess in her father's home, was of course a well-known beauty. Many others there were beside these, but as it would be impossible to enumerate them all, we shall let the list stand at this.

Great excitement was caused in the spring of 1868 by the attempt of Congress to impeach President Johnson. In fact, all serious conversation of the time appeared to revolve about and revert to that eventuality. My father was among those who were most deeply and sincerely gratified by the Senate's final failure to sustain the articles of impeachment.

Although we had passed three very happy years and more at the Washington Navy Yard we yet could not restrain an outburst of joyous excitement when, on December 19th, 1868, came the order:

"On the reporting of your relief, Rear Admiral C. H. Poor, on the 20th January next, you will regard yourself detached from the command of the Navy Yard, Washington, D. C., and will proceed to New York and report to Rear Admiral Godon, and when your flagship the *Franklin* is in all respects ready for sea, you are authorized to hoist your flag as Commander of the European Squadron.

"Respectfully,

"G. Welles,

"Secretary of the Navy,"

"Rear Admiral Wm. Radford,

"Commdt. Navy Yard, Washington, D. C."

The question of our crossing in a French liner and meeting my father somewhere abroad was being seriously discussed when

he received a letter from Secretary Welles enclosing the following, which of course completely altered all premeditated plans.

“Excutive Mansion, Washington, D. C.

“Jan. 8th, 1869.

“Will the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy please permit Admiral Radford’s family to accompany him to Europe in the *Franklin*?

“Andrew Johnson.”

And underneath this was written:

“Navy Department, 9th January, 1869.

“In accordance with the above Rear Admiral Radford has permission to take his family with him to Europe in the *Franklin*.

“G. Welles,

“Secretary of the Navy.”

Merely to show in some slight degree the feelings which William Radford inspired in his friends or in those who served under his command, I insert the following extracts from two letters received by him while awaiting the date of sailing in New York.

The first is from his chief clerk, of whose grave illness he had spoken in a letter to Admiral Paulding. The man, contrary to my father’s expectations, had recovered, and in a letter dated, “Washington, Jan. 28th/69,” he writes: “. . . When I parted with you on Saturday last my heart was too full to tell you how grateful I felt to you for your kindness, and particularly for your forbearance with me under the circumstances in which disease had placed me last winter. I hardly think any one else would have held on to me under the circumstances, and now that we have parted, possibly forever, I can only say that the prayers of my



wife and myself will always follow you in your journeyings in a foreign land.

"With feelings of deep gratitude and respect, I remain your ever humble and obedient servant,

Wm. A. Marks."

The other letter explains itself.

"Clinton Ave., Brooklyn, Feb. 7th/69.

"My dear Admiral,

"Upon your departure from New York I desire to thank you for the many acts of kindness for which I and my friends are indebted to you during your Administration in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Permit me, my dear Admiral, to assure you that I speak the sentiments of every gentleman of this city who has had the pleasure of knowing you, when I say that you have the *best wishes of all* for the welfare of yourself and the noble ship under your command. And permit me to add that it was with feelings of pride and pleasure that your Brooklyn friends read the announcement that Admiral Wm. Radford was and is to command the *Franklin*. . . . I wish you and your family a pleasant voyage and a happy return home.

"Truly Your Friend,

"Walter D. C. Boggs."

On January 28th the *Franklin* left the Brooklyn Navy Yard and anchored off the Battery, preparatory to taking on coal and ammunition.

Captain C. R. P. Rodgers, who, in his letter of August 14th, 1863, had expressed a wish to serve under Admiral Radford's orders, was Captain of the ship, and J. C. Howell, Fleet Captain.

Amidst a shower of flowers, bonbons, and kisses we bade our many friends and relatives adieu. On going aboard I was presented by the coxswain of my father's barge with the dearest little

curly-haired white dog profusely bedecked with pink ribbons and answering to the name of "Rosie." A law at that time forbade the sailors from having pets on shipboard, but by transferring "Rosie" to the Admiral's cabin the safety of the little creature was assured.

A report to the Secretary of the Navy, dated February 11th, 1869, closes with the words: "We crossed the Bar at 6.30 A.M. this day, and I shall proceed direct to Lisbon, Portugal.

"I am, Sir, Your obdt. Servant,

"Wm. Radford,

"Rear Admiral Comdg. European Squadron."

So my first acquaintance with Europe was to be made through that city where, in after years, I was to spend some happy months as the wife of a Russian diplomatist.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE EUROPEAN SQUADRON

THE port of Lisbon is with justice rated as the third most beautiful in the world. The first view, as seen from the mouth of the Tagus, of this lovely city of multi-colored houses, and fine squares lined with green trees, is a fascinating mixture of minarets and pointed roofs, of flat façades broken by lines of shutterless windows and the Oriental exuberance of Moorish architecture. Raised upon seven hills, Lisbon, half modern, half of ancient date, but always wholly Southern, rests in the grand amphitheater which they form for her, and past which the Tagus, dotted with the shipping of the world, flows seaward.

To us, after seventeen days of stormy passage, it appeared indeed a veritable paradise, and never was sight more welcome than that of the swarming bumboats laden with luscious fruit by which the *Franklin* was immediately surrounded as she came to anchor in the middle of the river, just opposite the great marble landing steps of the port.

From Lisbon, March 3rd, 1869, Rear Admiral Radford writes to the Secretary of the Navy:

"I have the honor to report to the Department the arrival of the *Franklin* at this place on the 28th ult., seventeen days from New York. On the fifteenth we encountered a very heavy gale from the southward, which lasted until the twenty-second.

"I found, on my arrival, all the vessels composing the squadron under my command (*Ticonderoga*, *Richmond*, *Swatara*, *Frolic*,

and *Guard*) lying at anchor in the harbor—the *Ticonderoga*, bearing the broad pennant of Commodore Pennock, having arrived only a few hours before the *Franklin*.”

Although I have crossed the ocean many times since then, never have I seen such waves as those during the gale mentioned in the foregoing despatch. For an entire week my mother, sister and I were unable to leave our beds simply because of the impossibility of standing. At the end of that time my sister and I were allowed to go up on deck for a few moments. The fury of the gale had, of course, greatly abated, yet, as we sat huddled together under the companion ladder watching the lofty masts as with each roll of the ship they appeared about to bury themselves in those onrushing mountainous masses of water, we could but wonder what it had been like when the storm was at its height? It was truly a wonderful sight. Our stay there was, however, a short one for the deck was all awash, and but for the lifelines we should not have dared to risk crossing it. In fact, even during fine weather, we spent little time on deck, as my father was strictly of the opinion that a “naval ship was no place for women,” and, on that day at least, we might possibly have subscribed to his way of thinking.

For six delightful weeks the *Franklin* lay at Lisbon, where she was undergoing certain repairs, and where every day there were things of interest to do or to behold. Visitors came in great numbers aboard the flagship, foremost among whom was, of course, King Louis, whose wife, Queen Maria Pia, was a daughter of King Victor Emmanuel II, and aunt of the present King of Italy. He who was later to reign as Carlos I was at that time a pretty, golden-haired boy of six.

In regard to King Louis' visit Rear Admiral Radford writes from Cadiz, April 16th, 1869:

“I have the honor to report to the Department that, during



the stay of the *Franklin* at Lisbon, the ship was visited by the King of Portugal, who was received with a Royal Salute, and manned yards. Also by Ministers and Representatives of the various governments resident at that place, who were received with appropriate honors."

The report continues: "I found at Lisbon on my arrival the English Channel Squadron, under the command of Vice Admiral Sir Thos. M. C. Symonds, K.C.B., consisting of eighteen powerful ironclad ships, some of them, I am informed, having a speed of fourteen (14) knots under steam alone. One of them, while we were there, was sent to sea to the assistance of a large timberladen water-logged ship, and towed her into port against very strong winds.

"On the occasion of the visit of the King of Portugal to ships of the English Channel Squadron, this ship manned yards, and saluted—the compliment was returned by them when the King visited this ship."

Well do I remember that thrilling moment! All those great English ironclads, and the vessels of our own squadron, firing at once as King Louis came aboard the *Franklin*!

A letter from Mr. James E. Harvey, then United States Minister to Portugal, recalls an interesting occasion.

"Legation of the United States,

"Lisbon, March 12th, 1869,

"Dear Admiral,

"The Nuncio is unwell and therefore he will not go aboard tomorrow.

"The Duke and Duchess of Montpensier, the Princesses Amelia and Christine, the Prince Ferdinand, with one lady of honor and one Aide-de-Camp, accompanied by the Spanish Minister and the First and Second Secretaries of that Legation, propose to visit you tomorrow at one o'clock and to embark from the packet

stairs at that hour, if there should be no impediment of weather. I shall be there to put my services at their disposition.

"I venture to suggest that the status of these Royal Personages has not been disturbed by the revolution in Spain as manifested by the Cortes now sitting. They were rudely exiled by the Queen, who was herself soon after expelled the country, and directly for that act.<sup>1</sup>

"Without any knowledge of the Naval technicalities on such subjects, it appears to me that the Spanish flag, which represents their only nationality, should be hoisted during the salute and customary honors. The mere presence of the Spanish Minister would render that compliment indispensable on any ship-of-war of another nation than ours, and the omission of that accepted usage upon the occasion of visits made by Diplomatic representatives, excites remark with those who do not understand its reason, or rather, the regulation which is said to prescribe that exception.

"You will be better able to determine than I am whether the barge will be sufficient to accommodate the number of visitors that has been named.

"Very Sincerely,

"James E. Harvey."

The Duke and Duchess of Montpensier were gratified by their reception on the *Franklin*, as was shown by their giving a dinner some few days later in my father's honor, to which he and my mother, as also my sister and myself were invited. That I was included in the list of guests was due to my being of the same age as the youngest daughter of the family—the Princess Mercedes—she who later became the first, and deeply beloved wife of King Alfonso XII of Spain, son of Queen Isabella. The eldest daughter of the House of Montpensier was the Princess Isabella, who, in 1864, had been married in England to the Count

<sup>1</sup> The Duchess of Montpensier was sister to Queen Isabella of Spain.

of Paris, and whose daughter became Queen Amélie of Portugal.

About that dinner—during which I was placed beside the Princes Mercédes—there was much of stateliness and formality, which, after all, was not without a certain charm; and, once it was over, the Duke invited my father and the other gentlemen of the party to his smoking-room, while the ladies sat and listened as the two older Princesses with one lady-in-waiting and a gentleman of their Court played eight-handed pieces on two pianos.

During our entire stay at Lisbon the Duke and Duchess of Montpensier were unremitting in their attentions, even placing their opera box at the disposition of my father and mother for any night or nights they might care to use it. Meyerbeer's opera "L'Africaine," in which the Portuguese national hero, Vasco da Gama, so largely figures, was then being given, and we came to know it well.

When, many years later, in the month of March, 1895, I was presented, as the wife of the First Secretary of the Russian Legation, to Queen Amélie, I mentioned having had the honor of meeting Her Majesty's august grandparents in Lisbon in former years. The Queen turned abruptly with a questioning look in her eyes to King Carlos, who, contrary to the usual custom, was present on that occasion, and he, waving one hand in a casual fashion, exclaimed: "Oh yes! That was when they couldn't go to Spain."

Despite the fact that the Portuguese Court was considered one of the most rigid in point of etiquette, that audience was marked by a very great degree of cordiality, mainly because of the fact—but thereby hangs a tale, and I must ask pardon for a slight digression!

Mr. de Meissner and I had but just arrived from Berne, Switzerland, where, among our most intimate friends, had been the *Conseiller* of the French Embassy and his wife—Monsieur and Madame Desprez. Madame Desprez was a daughter of Gen.

George B. McClellan, and Queen Amélie's father, the Count of Paris, was, as every student of American history must know, Aide-de-Camp to General McClellan during our Civil War. The Count of Paris and General McClellan had remained throughout the years on terms of closest intimacy; the distinguished Frenchman visiting his former Chief from time to time here in the United States, and General McClellan and his family visiting at the home of the Count of Paris in England.

Because of this friendship of long standing I had been asked by Madame Desprez to be the bearer of many messages to the Queen, and had in turn to answer many questions, even those pertaining to the state of health of a certain pet Skye terrier, all of which appeared greatly to interest Her Majesty. Realizing suddenly, however, that others were awaiting their audiences the Queen rose somewhat hastily, and I, possibly a bit startled, after one ceremonious curtsey, deliberately turned my back upon royalty and started for the door. Recovering myself when I had made but a few steps, I turned swiftly and swept downward in the lowest possible curtsey, but not without noting the amused expression upon the faces both of the King and Queen, and as, upon reaching the door, I repeated this ceremony for the third time, we were all frankly laughing. Fortunate indeed was it for me that the stately Duchesse de Palmella, the Royal Mistress of Ceremonies, was not present at the time!

So that was my first meeting with this gracious and heroic Queen, who, later, was to fight her husband's assassins with no weapon other than a bunch of roses at her command!

Among old friends met by my father and mother in Lisbon in the spring of 1869, were the Marquis and Marquise de Montholon, who having represented the French Imperial Government of that day in Washington, had recently been transferred to Lisbon. Their beautiful garden, abloom at that time with roses and



flowers of every description, was assuredly a thing to be remembered. But for roses commend me to that ideally lovely spot Cintra, to which, while the *Franklin* lay at Lisbon, we went, with a numerous party of officers from the ship, for a stay of several days. The camellias—of which there are said to be ten thousand bushes in the wonderful sloping gardens of Peña Castle—were then all in full bloom; but even that could not equal the sight of the garden of Sir Francis Cook's villa, "Monsserrate," where the roses, pink, white, red and yellow, trained to cover great forest trees, were indeed a sight wonderful to behold.

Visiting that place again in the spring of 1895 with some members of the Diplomatic Corps from Lisbon, the wife of the British Secretary, Mrs. Conway Thornton, said to me: "Suppose we call on Lady Cook. She is an American—perhaps you know her. Her name was Tennie Claflin."

Although I had not had the pleasure of knowing Miss Claflin we decided to make the visit; but were met with the announcement that: "Her ladyship was taking a bath," and so had to content ourselves with strolling about her wonderful garden, which is, or was in former days, always open to visitors.

Before leaving the subject of Lisbon I should like to recall the very gracious and charming manner in which the then Dowager Queen, Maria Pia, spoke to me in after years of my father's visit, saying how greatly both she and King Louis had enjoyed meeting him. Upon the outbreak of the Revolution in Portugal Queen Maria Pia returned to her native land, and is, I believe, still living in Italy.

Again, from Cadiz, Spain, Rear Admiral Radford writes on April 17th, 1869: "I have the honor to report to the Department the arrival of this ship at this port, on the 9th inst., fifty-two hours from Lisbon—also the disposition of the vessels composing the squadron under my command, as follows, viz.:

"The U. S. S. *Richmond*, Captain J. R. M. Mullany, arrived at Cartagena, Spain, on the 24th March, ult. having touched at Gibraltar, and was to leave on the 29th for Athens, Greece.

"The U. S. S. *Kenosha*, Captain Wm. H. Macomb, sailed from Lisbon on 4th inst. with orders to visit Cadiz, Malaga, Cartagena, Barcelona, and such other ports of Spain as the draft of the ship would permit her to enter with safety, where the presence of an American man-of-war might be needed. She arrived at this place on the 6th inst.

"It having been reported that serious disturbances were anticipated at Malaga on the 21st inst. in consequence of a conscription to be made there, Captain Macomb was directed to proceed to that place, and, should there be no necessity for the presence of his ship after the 21st, to proceed to Gibraltar for further instructions.

"The U. S. store ship *Guard* sailed from Lisbon on the 5th inst. with orders to Commander Adams to proceed to Gibraltar, Palermo, Naples, Civita-Vecchia and Spezzia; and so time her stay in each port as to reach Spezzia by the last week in May; to remain in that port until further orders.

"The U. S. S. *Swatara*, having completed her repairs, sailed from this port this day, with orders to Commander Blake to proceed to Philadelphia, and, on her arrival, to report by letter, to the Hon. Secretary of the Navy.

"The health of the crew of this ship is good.

"I am, Sir,

"Very Respectfully,

"Your Obdt. Servant,

"Wm. Radford,

"Rear Admiral U. S. N."

"Honorable Adolphe E. Borie,

"Secretary of the Navy."

In a letter from Mrs. Radford to her mother in Morristown, dated, "Cadiz, April 11th, 1869," is the following:

"We reached here on Friday morning, having left Lisbon on Wednesday morning. Last evening we went on shore just in time for the vesper service in the Cathedral. It is a grand and beautiful building, and it was one hundred and twenty years from the time it was begun till it was finished. In it are some of Murillo's beautiful paintings, which we could not see at all on account of the darkness, and I think they can only be seen at noon on bright days. The appearance of the city is very different from that of Lisbon, and not so picturesque, as it lies very low and flat, on a sand bar; however, once in the city it is quite pretty and *very clean*. There is a beautiful promenade between the houses and the bank, or shore, called the Alameda, where the band plays, and all the beauties of Cadiz come out to walk on Sunday afternoon, and one other day in the week. They all wear the black lace veils over their hair instead of bonnets, and in our long walk yesterday through the city we saw neither a bonnet nor a carriage or horse. The streets are so narrow that it would be impossible for two carriages to pass, so that they have to go down certain streets and go up others. The fruit and vegetable markets are excellent. Delightful strawberries in perfection now, bananas, oranges, artichokes, cauliflowers, tomatoes, etc., etc. On the other hand *no cream*, and no good butter. Instead of cream they put orange juice and sugar over the strawberries. On Tuesday or Wednesday we are going up to Seville for the day."

Here again the courtesy of the Montpensiers followed my father and mother, as they were invited by the Duke and Duchess to visit their beautiful home in Seville, from which, at that time, they themselves were debarred by their exile.

"There is to be a great fair the latter part of the week," continues the letter, "which they say is well worth seeing, but

the country is in such a disturbed state that the Admiral is afraid to have us go up at that time." (My mother always spoke of my father as "the Admiral.") "We shall leave here about next Saturday for Gibraltar, and I hope there to find a good many letters, as it is now several weeks since I have had a letter . . . and I am getting anxious for news. . . . I hope you still look forward to the prospect of coming over. . . . Every day it seems to me more painful to be separated from you, and I feel more anxious for you to decide to come." (In the many years of her married life it was my mother's first long separation from her parents.) "I am very anxious to hear what Mrs. Kearny is going to do, and when she is coming out. It would be such a nice opportunity for you to come with her. The *Swatara* goes home from here in a few days and the children are preparing a budget of letters to send you. They say the thermometer here does not vary more than ten degrees between winter and summer; and that there are a good many Americans who come here for the climate. As I got rather tired out visiting at Lisbon I am quite in hopes no one will know of my being on board until the vessel has left.

"The Governor General has just come on board to make a visit to the Admiral, and after that we are going on shore to have a view of the Cathedral by daylight, and to return in time for dinner. We are invited to a party tonight (Sunday) from 8 till 11. Of course we don't go, but tomorrow we go to lunch on the *Kenosha*, one of our own vessels. Give a great deal of love to . . . and remember me affectionately to all my old friends in Morristown. I always think of them all particularly on Sundays, when I have a great longing for the services of the dear old church there."

The *Franklin* left Cadiz at 6 A.M., arriving at Gibraltar at 3 P.M. on the 19th of April, where she remained until the 28th.





REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM RADFORD  
From a Portrait Made While in Command of the  
European Squadron, 1869-70



During that time the English Governor, Sir Richard Ayrie (I am not certain as to the spelling of his name) and his wife gave several entertainments in honor of the Commander-in-Chief of the American Fleet—a dinner, garden party, etc., etc. One thing that interested us greatly while there was the drilling of the Highland regiment—(their costume was then a rarer sight to behold than it is today)—and particularly enjoyable was the visit to the fortifications in the great rock. For this, donkeys were provided for the party, and as they were decidedly diminutive in size, and many of the officers who accompanied us unquestionably long of limb, the occasion, despite its deep interest, was also one of considerable merriment.

All those who have made that excursion know of the tunnel halfway up the rock, which is said to pass under the Straits of Gibraltar to a spot in distant Africa, but I have never as yet heard of any one who had actually explored it. It is, however, confidently affirmed that the monkeys—which are undoubtedly to be seen about this stronghold—came there by way of that passage.

From Gibraltar the *Franklin* crossed over to Algiers where we spent ten wonderful days. That Algeria is now a French Province was due to a dispute concerning a loan made by the Dey to the Directory in 1797. This dispute ended in insults by the Dey to France, with the result that in 1830 the latter power sent a fleet of a hundred ships and five hundred transports across the Mediterranean, and seized the capital. France had intended only to punish an insolent Dey, but attacks being made upon her from time to time, which she felt she must crush, she was led on, step by step, until she had everywhere established her power. There was an intermittent struggle of fourteen years with a native leader, Abd-el-Kader, who, in 1847, was forced to surrender, and France had gained what is still her most important colony.

At the time of the *Franklin's* visit the Governor of Algeria was Marshal McMahon, Duke of Magenta, who, after making an official visit to the flagship, extended many courtesies to the Admiral in command. Vividly do I remember a garden party given at the Governor's residence on the heights beyond the town. The garden alone, with its wealth of tropical vegetation, was a sight well worthy of remembrance, and enhanced as it was by the gracious hospitality there displayed, and the kaleidoscopic picture of pretty women and gorgeously uniformed men, it produced an ineffaceable impression on the mind.

Thanks to the courtesy of the French officials we were shown everything that was to be seen both in the city of Algiers and its environs, going even to a performance, or exhibition, of dancing dervishes, which was arranged especially in our honor. This was given at night in the open court of one of the houses, and it was anything but a pleasant sight to behold those frenzied creatures eating—amid wild contortions—great pieces of spiked cactus leaves, and biting writhing scorpions in half. My mother, sister, and I were very thankful they had not insisted upon our going up into the gallery with the women, but had, in compliance with our protest, consented to our remaining, with my father and the officers of the party, in the court below.

A visit made by my mother, sister, and myself to the harem of one of the Moslem princes of the city was not wanting in interest, or in amusement either, for that matter. It had been arranged that the prince was to meet us at a certain place in the city, whither we went escorted by my father, his Flag-Lieutenant, Mr. Folger, his Aide-de-Camp, Ensign W. McCarthy Little, and my oldest brother, a boy of thirteen. As we walked through the narrow streets following my father and our Moorish host, we wondered how the latter would rid himself of so large a company, but, as we reached the entrance to his rather stately dwelling he turned,



and bowing with exquisite Oriental politeness, said: "Gentlemen, you will find an excellent café just across the street."

Although we who entered that Moslem home saw only some three or four unintelligent looking and certainly far from beautiful women, we yet could not but be touched by their eager desire to show us every politeness, and we even swallowed without a grimace some nauseatingly sweet paste made of orange flowers offered us by a young girl, while the ruler of the household—who was seated upon a slightly raised central divan—beamed complacently down upon his guests, for whom chairs had been provided, and on his wives who sat upon low stools about him.

During their farewell visit to the Governor-General and his wife, the MacMahons presented my father and mother with their photographs, and had many pleasant things to say about the *Franklin* and her officers. Little did any one then think that in four short years from that time Marshal MacMahon would be already the second President of the newly formed French Republic (1873-79), as M. Thiers had resigned after three years' tenure of the office.

It had been my father's intention upon leaving Algiers to stop at Port Mahon, and we had been looking forward with much interest to this visit. Hardly however were we out of sight of land before we encountered so severe a gale that all hope of making the Island of Minorca had to be abandoned, and the *Franklin* proceeded directly to Toulon. There we—the family—left the ship and went immediately to Paris, meeting in that gay metropolis the wives and families of many of the officers of the flagship, as well as of other vessels of the squadron. After spending a few weeks in that enchanting city—where Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie, all unconscious of the storm that was to burst upon them the succeeding year, still reigned—my mother moved to Versailles, and there we settled ourselves for the summer.

A letter from Rear Admiral Radford to Admiral Porter, dated, "Toulon, France, May 12th/69," reads:

"I hasten to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th March, ultimo, which was received yesterday, and to assure you it will give me great pleasure to have Mr. Grimes" (Senator from Iowa, and Chairman of the Naval Committee) "and his traveling companions as my messmates.

"There is no one who has a greater appreciation of his valuable services to our country and the Navy, or a greater respect for his character as a man than myself.

"I have large and comfortable quarters on board the *Franklin*, and should it be my good fortune to receive him on board, I feel perfectly satisfied that his time will be made to pass pleasantly.

"I shall direct the commanding officers of the other vessels of the European Squadron to carry out the wishes of the Department and yourself in case he should fall in with either of them, and am confident he will receive every attention.

"With many thanks for your kind wishes, believe me, Admiral,

"Sincerely yours,

"Wm. Radford,

"Rear Admiral,

"Comdg. European Squadron."

"Vice Admiral D. D. Porter, U. S. N.,

"Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

Another report dated, "Toulon, June 17th," relates, in part, to an order which, as may be readily imagined, met with little popularity in the service. It reads:

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Department's letters of 20th April ult. in reference to strict economy with regard to the use of coal; to have all cruising done under sail

alone; and steam not to be used except under the most pressing circumstances."

Leaving Toulon on June 19th, the *Franklin* after touching at Ville Franche and Genoa, proceeded to Naples, from where Rear Admiral Radford writes on July 27th, acknowledging receipt of the Department's letter "enclosing . . . a communication . . . in relation to the system of running submarine torpedoes; and desiring that I myself should witness the experiments to take place at Fiume, Austria, between May and September, and give my opinion of the merits of the invention."

Another communication, of August 7th, to the Hon. George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, says: "Wind permitting I shall sail this day for Trieste, and will personally attend the torpedo experiments at Fiume."

A letter from Robert Whitehead to Rear Admiral Radford states: "I shall be ready on Tuesday, the 26th inst. to commence the experiments for you with the torpedoes."

A despatch from Trieste, Austria, August 30th, reads in part: "I had been ordered by the Department to visit Fiume to witness some experiments with a submarine torpedo. At Naples I was informed by Vice Admiral A. Milne, British Navy, that he had sent two of his gunnery officers to Fiume, to examine and report upon the torpedo, and that they had written him the experiments, which were drawing to a close, were novel and highly interesting.

"I was detained at Naples longer than I had anticipated by Paymaster Bradford's being relieved by Paymaster Gulick, which necessarily consumed some days, in making the transfer of stores, money, etc.

"On the 7th inst. I sailed from Naples through the Straits of Messina. Arriving off the entrance of the Adriatic . . . for three days I beat off Cape Santa Maria di Leuca, making but little to windward—at times under double reefed topsails. On the evening

of the third day I found that if I wished to reach Trieste in time for the experiments it would be necessary to use steam.

"At 1 P.M. on the 14th inst. I gave orders to lower the propeller and get up steam. . . . At 5 P.M. furled all sails and commenced steaming with about one half steam power. . . ."

Older officers remember how severe was the law at that time against using coal on naval vessels, and we have seen the order Rear Admiral Radford had received to that effect when at Toulon. This fortunately, is a difficulty with which the Navy of today has no longer to contend.

Of the experiments at Fiume, Rear Admiral Radford reports in part: "I am satisfied that Mr. Whitehead's torpedo is a great stride beyond anything of the kind I have ever seen or heard of.

"The Austrian Government, having purchased the right to use this torpedo, is now building vessels in which to carry them, to be used at sea; and a Fleet having vessels in it constructed to use these torpedoes would, in my judgment, have great advantage over those without them; and I feel it my duty earnestly to recommend their adoption in our service, unless something better, that I know not of, can be found.

"I have some drawings of a torpedo vessel, reconstructed by Mr. Whitehead, which I will forward to the Department, as soon as they can be completed."

Here we see, in its early stages of development, what is today so formidable an instrument of warfare.

A letter of introduction to the Admiral then commanding the Maritime Department of Venice reads as follows:

"Washington, 20 Janvier, 1869,  
"Mon très cher frère,

"L'Amiral Radford Commandant en Chef l'Escadre Americaine de la Méditerranée visitera Venise. Tu connaîtras chez lui un marin distingué qui a rendu des grands services a son Pays, et



“ ton frère affectionné,  
“ M. Cerruti.”

“Admiral Radford, Commander-in-Chief of the American Mediterranean Squadron, will visit Venice. You will find in him a distinguished sailor who has rendered great services to his country, and an excellent friend of the Italians. You will be happy to make his acquaintance and to show him through our arsenal at Venice. Admiral Radford is taking his family with him to Europe. I flatter myself that you will offer them every hospitality. Adieu,

“Your affectionate brother,  
“M. Cerruti.”)

The writer of the above was the representative of the Italian government then in Washington.

Leaving Trieste, the *Franklin*, after a fourteen days' run, reached Tunis, Africa, and from there proceeded on her way to Marseilles, where she arrived September 19th.

Among unofficial letters of my father's, I find the following of which I had never known, and which, for some reason, evidently did not meet with favorable consideration.

"Dear Admiral, "Mediterranean, Sept. 18th, 1869.

“ I write to solicit a favor from you, though I suppose, as you are so much annoyed in that way, such letters are not very welcome.

"There is a young gentleman, a nephew of mine, Mr. S. W. Kearny, now living on board this ship as my clerk, who wishes to enter the U. S. Marine Corps. He is well educated, of correct habits and just twenty-one years of age. If you could say a good word for him to the Hon. Sec. of the Navy, I would be very thankful.

"His father, the late Genl. S. W. Kearny, U. S. Army, lost his life by disease contracted in the Mexican War, and had many army friends. I think President Grant would be favorable to his appointment, if nominated by the Hon. Secretary.

"If there is any chance of his getting the appointment, I will write to the President, but if not I trust you will tell me.

"Mr. Kearny's applicaion is forwarded this day to the department.

"With my kindest regards to Mrs. Porter, believe me, dear Admiral,

"Yours very truly,

"Wm. Radford,

"Rear Admiral, U. S. N."

"Vice Admiral D. D. Porter, U. S. Navy,

"Navy Department, Washington, D. C."

Upon the *Franklin's* arrival at Marseilles my father left the ship, and joined us in Versailles, where we had passed a delightful summer. Going from there to Switzerland we spent a pleasant month on the borders of Lake Geneva; and then, leaving my two older brothers at school in Lausanne, my mother, sister, and I with the two little boys and their colored nurse, journeyed southward with my father, putting up for the month of November at the Hotel Cannebière at Marseilles.

A letter from Rear Admiral Radford, dated "Marseilles, Nov. 14th, 1869," reads: "I have the honor to inform the Depart-

ment that I received last evening a telegram dated 13th inst. from B. F. Stevens, Esq., U. S. Despatch Agent, London, viz.: 'Secretary Robeson instructs me by cable to send you this despatch—Send a vessel, the *Richmond* preferred, to England to carry the remains of the late Geo. Peabody to the United States.' A second letter, of November 26th, states:

" . . . the *Richmond* left Malaga on the 10th inst. for Barcelona. On the 19th inst. the *Plymouth* arrived at this place, from a somewhat protracted cruise along the coasts of Syria and Africa.

" On the 20th, not having heard from Captain Mullany (*Richmond*), and Captain Macomb volunteering to proceed at once to Portsmouth and take the place of the *Richmond*, (notwithstanding his ship required caulking), I directed him to proceed with despatch to Portsmouth, and communicate, on his arrival with His Excellency Mr. Motley, to carry out the wishes of the Department.

" The *Plymouth* was delayed on the 21st instant by a heavy gale blowing, and the refusal of the pilot to take the ship out of the harbor while it lasted. I then telegraphed to Mr. Motley to know if the *Plymouth* arriving on the 1st of December, would be in time to accompany the *Monarch*." (The English ship that was to convey the remains of Mr. Peabody to the United States.) " On the morning of the 23rd, receiving a reply that the English ship would wait for her, she sailed at 11 A.M."

On December 11th, a letter from Ville Franche reports " the arrival of the Flagship *Franklin* at this port, on the 10th inst. seven (7) days from Marseilles."

On November 7th the *Juniata* (Commander Stephen B. Luce), had joined the squadron at Marseilles, and in December the entire fleet rendezvoused in the beautiful harbor of Ville Franche.

This was but a pleasant drive from Nice, where, in one of the

hotels, my father had taken an apartment. Foreseeing that the winter would be a very gay one, my mother planned sending me to a convent school, but thanks to my father's earnest protestations that plan was not carried into effect.

That winter of 1869-70—during which, all unsuspected, the war clouds were gathering over France—was as bright and animated as in former days all winters were in that gay metropolis; and, with the exception of dinners and official balls, there were few of the festivities at which I was not present. The presence of the United States squadron certainly added vastly to the gayety of the season. There were weekly afternoon dances on the *Franklin*, besides numerous races arranged between the gigs and barges of the different ships of the squadron. It was indeed an exciting moment when the *Franklin's* twelve-oared barge carried off the prize from all competitors!

The American officers and their families were greatly fêted in Nice. Capt. C. R. P. Rodgers, with his courtly manners—he was called the “Chesterfield” of the Navy—was always popular; as was also Capt. J. C. Howell, whose bluff humor rarely failed to entertain his hearers. I well remember one day, in crossing the ocean, my father sending an orderly to say to Captain Howell that he would like to speak to him immediately about a certain matter, and the orderly returning reporting with a perfectly grave face, “Captain Howell says as he'll be down in ten minutes, Sir; he's just dying (dyeing,) sir!” Needless to add that Captain Howell's hair was of ebon hue!

Many were the distinguished visitors we met aboard the *Franklin*. I say *we*, because, although my morning hours were devoted to studies with an excellent French governess, I was allowed to go to any entertainments given in the afternoons, and was, of course, always present at the several evening dances given by my father and mother in our own spacious apartment.



Thus it happened that I was on board the *Franklin* one afternoon toward the end of December, 1869, when the then Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia and his wife the Crown Princess Victoria visited the American flagship. Very different would have been the history of the world today had he, who in 1888 reigned for so short a period (three months) as Emperor of Germany, but lived.

Both the Imperial visitors were simple and unaffected in the extreme, and that they were pleasantly impressed by their somewhat lengthy visit aboard the *Franklin* was evinced by the following communications received by my father some few years later.

“Department of State, Washington.

“Mr. Cadwalader has great pleasure in forwarding to Admiral Radford a note received today from Mr. Davis, at Berlin, which he sends as the best means of conveying the message it contains.

“Thursday, 22nd, July, 1875.”

The note in question follows:

“American Legation, Berlin, July 3rd, 1875.

(Unofficial)

“Dear Mr. Cadwalader,

“At the late dinner given to Admiral Worden and his Staff by the Crown Prince and the Crown Princess of Prussia, at Potsdam, a pleasant incident occurred which I take the liberty to communicate to you unofficially.

“In the course of conversation the Crown Prince spoke to me of the pleasure he had formerly had in visiting the flagship *Franklin* in the Mediterranean when Admiral Radford was in command of the Fleet (I think he said it was in 1869), and begged me to convey his remembrances to that officer. It hardly

seems worth while to write the Secretary of State officially about this purely personal matter. I therefore venture to ask you to be so good as to inform Admiral Radford of this pleasant message.

"Thanking you in advance for doing so, I am, My dear Mr. Cadwalader,

"Very truly yours,

"Bancroft Davis."

"The Honorable

"John L. Cadwalader."

The Crown Princess Victoria of Prussia, was, as will be remembered, the daughter of Queen Victoria and Princess Royal of England. She was a woman of strong and determined will and feared in no wise to defy Bismarck.

During the winter of 1887-88, the Crown Prince Frederick, attacked by cancer of the throat, was at St. Remo, where, in January, the operation of tracheotomy was performed. Shortly after this Bismarck sent his promising pupil—author of the late world cataclysm—for the purpose of inducing the Crown Prince to renounce his claims to the throne in favor of his son. The Emperor William I was then failing rapidly, and it was generally known he had but a short time to live. William, his grandson, with whom delicacy of feeling was not a salient trait, set out blithely upon his journey, but his mother—a true daughter of Queen Victoria—forewarned of his coming, met him at the entrance of their villa and peremptorily ordered him to depart. He could but return and report the failure of his mission.

On March 9th Kaiser William I passed away, and Victoria, with indomitable courage, brought Frederick back to Berlin, where he reigned for ninety-nine days, breathing his last at Potsdam on June 15th, 1888. This San Remo incident was widely discussed at the time in Berne, Switzerland, where my husband was then

stationed, and every one was filled with indignation at the heartlessness of the proceeding.

Another incident that occurred during the early years of the reign of William II was the following: Being then in Berne, Mr. de Meissner and I were dining one evening in the house of one of the members of the German Diplomatic Corps, when the toast, "Der Tag," was given. This, I must say, was only responded to by the Germans themselves. As we were walking home from that dinner (in the Swiss capital few, except the wives of the Ambassadors, drove) W. said to me, "Do you know what the Germans mean by the toast, 'Der Tag'?" Of course I did not, and he added, "It's to the day they lick England!" At which I, of course, laughed scornfully. And that was just about thirty years ago!

Asking pardon for this somewhat lengthy digression we will return again to the good ship *Franklin*.

On February 15th, the flagship left Ville Franche for Genoa, my father taking us with him for that short journey. It was indeed a trip never to be forgotten. A perfect moonlight night—the ship sailing just close enough to the coast to command a view of the chain of hills—the blending of the Maritime Alps and the Apennines—and all about us the sea shimmering and sparkling with iridescent lights in what my father and all the other officers gathered with us on the quarter-deck declared to be the most brilliant phosphorescent display they had ever witnessed.

From Genoa, where we spent Carnival week, we continued on to Spezzia, reaching there in the *Franklin* on the 3rd of March; and there, a few days later, my mother, sister and I bade the good ship a final adieu. Accompanied by my father we went first to Florence, where, a few days after our arrival, he received the following letter from the U. S. Consul in Tunis:

“ Consulate of the United States, Tunis,

“ March 12th, 1870.

“ Rear Admiral William Radford,

“ Commanding U. S. Naval Forces in the Mediterranean,  
“ Admiral,

“ A deplorable occurrence took place here on the 9th instant, the details of which you will find in a despatch to the Department of State, a copy of which I have the honor to enclose.

“ Since yesterday we have received such information as leads us to apprehend further and still graver trouble among this population and I have just been in communication with the French and English consuls-general, who have decided to ask their admirals at Toulon and Malta to send a vessel here to afford assistance in case of necessity, or to be at hand to send to Malta or France for a larger force.

“ There is a serious fermentation among the natives who look upon the maniac as a martyred Saint, and they threaten vengeance on the Christians who had him dragged from the sanctuary by the janissary of a consulate and compelled the authorities to execute him without trial.

“ It cannot be denied that the proceeding was very summary, and that if the excited foreign populace could have been pacified by any means short of immediate execution, it would have been wiser to have given the culprit the trial to which he was entitled by their laws as well as by our own.

“ However this may be, we are in the midst of a turbulent and fanatical population and it will require but a spark to produce a most disastrous explosion.

“ The massacres at Aleppo and Djedda are of too recent a date for us to forget that if an outbreak occurs and a war for religion is proclaimed, all the authorities here will be at once overwhelmed



by an infuriated and bigoted people, who look upon death in such a cause as the most direct road to paradise.

"The city is patrolled with troops and will probably remain quiet as long as they are not withdrawn.

"I have the honor to be

"Very respectfully, Your obedient servant,

"G. H. Heap,

"U. S. Consul."

The accompanying report gives a vivid picture of the event herein referred to. With the same heading it reads:

"Honorable Hamilton Fish,

"Secretary of State.

"Sir,

"It is my painful duty to inform you of an occurrence which has created the greatest consternation in this community and which threatened and may still lead to serious consequences.

"On the 9th instant at 2 P.M. a religious Mahometan fanatic, excited by the fumes of *hasheesh*, rushed through the streets brandishing a saber and proclaiming: 'In the name of Allah, war against the unbelievers and death to all Christians.' He was a water carrier by trade and about 22 years of age.

"He commenced his frightful mission on the edge of the foreign quarter and traversed it twice in different directions through the most crowded streets dealing wounds to all he met. Though a number of shots were fired at him by Europeans, he finally escaped unhurt into the Moorish quarter where he sought rest as well as sanctuary in the principal mosque. A janissary of the British consulate-general disregarding the sanctity of the asylum dragged him out into the street where he was seized and conveyed to prison.

"In the meanwhile the streets became filled with an excited populace, composed principally of Sicilians and Maltese crying for vengeance, who were with difficulty restrained by the consuls from proceeding to an indiscriminate massacre of the natives within their reach.

"The fanatic attacked a servant and another man within the gate of the American consulate and wounded both severely. One of my janissaries in attempting to seize him received a serious wound in his left hand which I fear he will lose. An instant after he cut an Italian lad across the face, a girl on the neck,—nearly severing the head from the body; killed an infant in its mother's arms, wounding the latter, and all this within the space of a minute. I then lost sight of him, but from the shrieks I heard I could judge of the destruction he was dealing. Altogether he has wounded, it is reported, eighty-two persons, of whom five have since died. In this number are several Mahometans in the service of Christians, the rest are Christians and Jews, the majority being women and children.

"The whole town was soon in an uproar. The police, always inefficient, were quite paralyzed. The assassin passed in front of the principal police station in the European quarter, where there are always some twenty-five armed men, and although they saw him cutting people down, not one moved to arrest him.

"A meeting of the consuls was at once called at the British consulate general, and it was decided to depute two of their number to the Bey to request him to come at once into the city with a sufficient force to restrain the native population, which fanatical desperadoes were exciting to put all Christians to death. The *Chargé d'Affaires* of France and I were requested to fulfill this mission and we proceeded to the Bey's residence in the country. H. H. was in bed but soon received us. He was much agitated and offered to send all his troops with as many members



*U. S. S. Franklin*  
Flagship of the European Squadron, 1869





of his government as we required, but declined showing himself in town, alleging that he feared it would but increase the excitement. Leaving the Bey, the French Chargé d'Affaires returned to the city while I went to the Prime Minister's country seat to warn him of what was going on and request his immediate presence. He answered my appeal promptly and soon made his appearance in the principal square which was filled with a frantic crowd of Italians, Maltese, and Greeks.

"Orders were immediately given to take the assassin from prison and to behead him, and in the course of a few hours tranquillity was restored.

"The town has been put under martial law and patrols will be maintained for several days until after the approaching festival of Bairam. All the consulates are guarded with troops.

"Today the consular corps waited on the Bey by appointment and an address was read thanking him and his officials for the manner in which our appeal had been responded to, and requesting that the police be reorganized so as to render it more efficient. The Bey promised to give the necessary orders to this effect.

"At a meeting of the consuls yesterday it was voted to present to each of the two janissaries of the British and United States consulates a pair of pistols as a testimonial of their good conduct,—and the British consul will ask his government to allow him to give his janissary the sum of 20 pounds.

"I beg leave to recommend to the Department to present to the janissary of this consulate a sword, of the value of one hundred dollars—with a suitable inscription. His name is Mahomet Ben Ali. He has been several years in the service of this consulate, and has served it with intelligence and fidelity. Such a mark of the appreciation of the Government will have a very happy effect here.

"A considerable amount has been subscribed for the sufferers.

"I have just been called upon by Mr. Conti, under secretary of state, with a request from the Prime Minister to notify all persons under the protection of this consulate to keep within doors, or at any rate not to go outside the town as in consequence of the festival of Bairam the religious excitement among the Mahometan population might bring on a collision.

"This precautionary measure is not unnecessary, as the effervescence occasioned by this extraordinary and disastrous event is still great, and the Moors are buying up all the arms that are for sale. I must state however that in visiting my wounded janissary I have been obliged to traverse some of the remote Mahometan quarters, and have everywhere been treated with the usual respect.

"I have the honor to be,

"Very respectfully, Your obedient servant,

"G. H. Heap, U. S. Consul."

This matter having been settled by my father, by the sending of the U. S. S. *Juniata* to Tunis, we continued on our way to Rome, and thence, traveling northward, reached Lausanne, Switzerland, by the middle of April. There we were to spend the summer—the fatal summer of the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War—and there, on April 19th, all unconscious of impending events, my father left us to rejoin his ship at Ville Franche.

The following despatch of May 20th, 1870, from Malaga, Spain, shows that Rear Admiral Radford had no intention of being cheated out of that visit to Port Mahon.

"I have the honor to report to the Department the arrival of the Flagship *Franklin* at this place on the 19th instant, twelve days from Ville Franche, France, stopping three days at Port Mahon."

As the *Franklin* continued her way along the Spanish coast

an incident occurred, at what may be called "A Port in Spain," that was certainly not devoid of humor. The U. S. consul accredited to the town was making his official call on board the flagship, when, as he was about to leave, the Commander of the squadron, somewhat mystified at noting a showy ornament worn by his visitor, inquired: "Is that a foreign decoration?"

"That, Sir," replied the consul, striking his manly chest, "is a view of my native city, Chicago"; then, noting the Admiral's bewildered expression, he explained that, seeing every official abroad wore "some such thing," he had ordered the "trinket" made at home and sent out to him, and really found that "it answered every purpose."

A report from "The Downs, England, July 7th," informs the Department of the "arrival of the *Franklin* at this anchorage on the 5th inst. seventeen days from Lisbon, Portugal."

On the 8th, the *Franklin* reached Flushing, Holland, from where Rear Admiral Radford writes on July 15th, 1870, "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Department's letter of 1st inst. directing me to return home in the *Franklin*, which ship is to be repaired, and will be relieved at New York of the command of the European Fleet."

These orders were however modified by reason of the European war, and Rear Admiral Radford was directed to "turn the *Franklin* over to Rear Admiral Glisson for his flagship," and to "return to the United States by packet."

Before the carrying out of this order, however, there were sad days aboard the *Franklin* as is shown by the following report:

"Flushing, Holland, Aug. 8th, 1870.

"It is my unpleasant duty to report to the Department that an epidemic of variola of unusual severity has occurred on board this ship. The *Franklin* left Lisbon, under sail alone, on the

18th June for this place, the officers and crew, five hundred and ninety-seven (597) all in good health. On the 27th, the eighth day out, one of the crew who had not been on shore at Lisbon, was admitted on the sick list with fever. On the second day after, it was discovered that he had variola.

"He was then placed on the after part of the gun-deck, near an open gun port, with a canvas screen around his cot, and men who had had the smallpox appointed to wait upon him. All the officers and men were immediately vaccinated with fresh matter obtained at Lisbon, being the third time during the cruise."

Despite the fact of their hurrying *under steam* to Deal, and of their putting the sick man ashore at the hospital there, another case appeared on July 17th; on the 18th seven more were taken ill, and on the 19th, there being sixteen additional cases, the ship was placed by the Health Authorities under strict quarantine. By July 26th the total number had reached fifty-eight, including Master T. B. M. Mason, (later Rear Admiral Mason), and Midshipman G. B. Harber, both of whom recovered.

On the 2nd of August the ship was released from quarantine although there were still twenty-five cases in the hospital ashore. Five men in all were lost at the hospital. It seemed rather a sad termination for what had been so pleasant a cruise.

One report there is concerning that time which should surely be here included.

"Flushing, Holland, Aug. 8th, 1870.

"I feel it a pleasure, as well as my duty, to call the attention of the Department to the praiseworthy conduct of Surgeon Thomas J. Turner, U. S. Navy, attached to the U. S. S. *Juniata*.

"Hearing at Antwerp of the epidemic raging among our crew, he immediately volunteered his services to attend our sick; arriving at this place on the 21st of July, ultimo, he has, since that



time, been unremitting in his attentions to the sick at the Hospital, and is still devoting himself to their care and comfort.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

"Very Respectfully, Your obedient servt.,

Wm. Radford,

"Rear Admiral, U. S. N."

"Hon. George M. Robeson,

"Secretary of the Navy."

On August 10th, Rear Admiral Radford informed the Department that he had that day "transferred the command of the U. S. European Squadron to Rear Admiral O. S. Glisson," and that he should return to the United States as soon as he could obtain a passage in one of the steamers. He furthermore added: "I have been informed that all the accommodations in each line are engaged for several weeks to come."

This proved to be indeed the case, but during those days of waiting we were both witnesses of and participators in many scenes and events of deepest interest.

List of officers of U. S. S. *Franklin*, 1st rate, Flagship of European Squadron, 1869.

Rear Admiral Wm. Radford.

Captain C. R. P. Rodgers.

Captain J. C. Howell (Fleet).

Lieutenant Commanders: F. V. McNair, J. D. Marvin, A. R. McNair, F. S. Brown, G. W. Sumner, F. J. Higginson and Frank Wildes.

Lieutenant, W. M. Folger.

Ensigns, J. J. Hunker, and Wm. McC. Little.

Midshipmen: R. M. Thompson, C. W. Chipp, A. Elliott, H. C. Stinson, W. M. Cowgill, T. J. Wood.

Surgeon, Charles Martin.

Passed Assistant Surgeon, H. P. Babcock.

Assistant Surgeon, G. O. Allen.

Paymaster, J. O. Bradford (Fleet).

Chief Engineer, W. H. Shock (Fleet).

First Assistant Engineers: Clark Fisher, W. J. Montgomery, and H. C. Beckwith.

Second Assistant Engineers: W. L. Nicoll, W. L. Baillie, and C. J. Habighorst.

Chaplain, G. W. Smith.

Captain of Marines, L. L. Dawson, Brevet Major (Fleet).

First Lieutenant of Marines, R. S. Collum.

Admiral's Secretary, Mr. E. Brown.

Admiral's Clerk, S. W. Kearny.

In 1870 the Lieutenant Commanders were: F. V. McNair (Executive Officers), J. D. Marvin, S. P. Gillett, F. J. Higginson, G. W. Sumner, W. M. Folger, Frank Wildes, and H. C. White.

Masters: J. J. Hunker, and W. R. S. McKenzie.

Ensigns: R. P. Rodgers, Lambert G. Palmer, and Theo. B. M. Mason.

Midshipmen: Giles B. Harber, Wm. P. Potter, A. M. Thackera, John C. Wilson, Frank Birney, Arthur P. Nazro, William F. Driggs, John H. Moore, Emory H. Taunt, and Albert G. Berry.

Surgeon, Charles Eversfield.

Passed Assistant Surgeon, J. M. Flint.

Assistant Surgeon, G. O. Allen.

Paymaster, John S. Gulick.

Chief Engineer, E. Fithian (Fleet).

Second Lieutenant of Marines, H. G. Coffin.

The other officers were as in 1869.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### PARIS IN AUGUST, 1870

ON July 15th, 1870, war credits were voted in Paris amid great excitement, and France entered into the valley of the shadow. The immediate cause of this was the falsification—or condensation—by Bismarck of the famous “Ems despatch,” making it so discourteous in tone that the French considered their Ambassador, Benedetti, had been insulted. Technically, war was declared on July 19th. Only ten members of the Chamber, among whom were Thiers and Gambetta, voted against it.

The first battle, resulting in a slight victory for the French, was fought on August 2nd, at Saarbrücken.

At that time my sister and I were in Lausanne, where my two brothers, K. and R. were at school; while my mother, with the two younger boys, was at the Baths of Lavey, in the Valley of the Rhone.

Letters filled with inquiries concerning my father's movements were pouring in from every side, one being from the widow of Captain Griffin, which, although written from Prussia but twelve days before the declaration of hostilities, evinced no suspicion of the actual state of affairs.

“Kreuznach, Prussia, July 5th, 1870.

“My dear Admiral,

“Sunday's mail brought me a letter from Mary telling me that you were recalled home and that you would all return to the ‘land of the free and the home of the brave’ in August. I saw

by the newspapers that some one had sailed to take command of the Mediterranean Squadron, but knowing that your time was not yet up I did not even notice the officer's name, supposing it a mere newspaper story.

"We shall stay a fortnight longer here, then go to Hombourg for three weeks, then to Ammergau to see the 'Miracle Play,' which will bring us to Switzerland some time in August, but too late I fear to meet you anywhere. Every week brings me pleasant letters from home. Mother is now at Ursino, but the end of next week will go to Glenclyffe where Sister Julia" (Mrs. Hamilton Fish) "has already gone. I hope Mr. Fish will take at least a week's holiday this summer. Last summer he took none at all; he is much too honest to neglect his duties." (As Secretary of State.)

"With the hope that if you return to the United States you may get just what duty you want, and also in the hope that we may soon meet, believe me,

Yours Affectionately,

"Christine K. Griffin."

Extracts from letters from my grandfather from Morristown, N. J., dated, "July 19th, 1870," read:

"My dear Daughter,

"Your first letter written from Lavey, I find is dated late in June. . . . Since the beginning of this terrible war between France and Prussia we have felt very anxious for your comfort as well as safety—knowing that on the *Rhine* the greatest struggle will take place between the contending parties."

This letter was written on the very day on which a diet of the North German Confederation met, and unconditionally placed the military resources of the nation at the disposal of the (Prussian) government.



"We have learned," continues the letter, "from several good authorities that the Navy Department telegraphed by the Cable on July 6th, to Admiral Radford to bring home the *Franklin*. . . . We regret very much that the war in Europe breaks up all possibility of leaving K. there for his education. . . ." My brother also regretted this as he, in after years, said the school in Lausanne was the most thorough he had ever attended."

Another letter from the same to the same, dated July 22nd, says:

"We regret that you appear to be in ignorance of the dreadful war that has broken out between France and Prussia. But as you are situated in Switzerland, acknowledged to be neutral territory, we hope you will experience no personal inconvenience, either where you are or on your way to embark for home. . . . As to the *Franklin* being ordered home to the United States, it is Admiral Porter who first reported it here by letter to Mrs. McKenzie (saying), the *Franklin* might be expected to reach America between the first and tenth of September."

That this had been the first plan of the Department is shown by the following letter from Admiral Porter.

"Navy Department, Washington,  
"July 6th, 1870.

"My dear Admiral,

"I have received your several letters and have arranged matters, I hope, to suit you. I was not in Washington when the arrangement was made to change the Commanders of Fleets. I tried all I knew how to keep you out there as long as possible but did not succeed. If you conclude to come home in the ship it will not be necessary for Howell to come home unless he wants to, as you can give him permission to remain out until the ship returns to Europe.

"The whole matter is left pretty much to your own discretion. Glisson can go out by steamer, and hoist his flag temporarily on board the *Richmond*, or live on shore at Nice, or any other place where he can conduct the operations of the fleet.

"I am sorry to hear of the misfortune to your propeller, and the best thing will be for the *Franklin* to return home and be fitted with all the modern improvements.

"Glisson is going out at once to relieve you, and you and he can talk things over and fix them pretty much to suit yourselves, as long as I am here; when I go you can paddle your own canoe.

"Give my regards to Rodgers and Howell. Tell Rodgers that it will depend pretty much on himself how long he stays here. God willing he shall not stay any longer than it will take to get the propeller fixed.

"With best wishes I remain,

"Yours very truly,

"David D. Porter,

"V. A."

"Rear Admiral William Radford,

"Commdg. European Fleet."

Turning over the command of the European Squadron to Rear Admiral Glisson on August 10th, 1870, my father joined us at Lausanne, and two or three days later we left for Paris. No one but supposed at that time that the war would sweep immediately into Germany. The French cry, "On to Berlin," bespoke an assured victory, and as our sympathies were entirely with France we departed with light hearts for the French capital. Our party was assuredly a large one, as, beside my father and mother, four brothers, sister and self, and our faithful colored maid, my cousin Stephen Kearny was with us, and the number of our trunks doubtless approximated that with which an American family of those

days usually traveled. However that may be, it is certain we were all highly amused, when, upon our arrival in Paris, one of the porters engaged in collecting our baggage, exclaimed, as he wiped the perspiration from his brow: "Mon Dieu, ce sont les Prussiens! "

The hotels in Paris being at that time filled to overflowing, we were fortunate indeed in finding a furnished apartment on the rue Galilée, near the intersection of what was then the "Avenue Joséphine." At that intersection there then stood a beautiful statue of the Empress Josephine, which was later removed by the French Republican Government. As, one day during the autumn of 1913, I was strolling through one of the smaller art galleries on the Champs Elysées, with a cousin of my husband's, we suddenly—in an out-of-the-way spot—came across this very statue, which I immediately recognized as an old friend. The Comtesse de St. C., my companion, had never before beheld it, and I was somewhat amused at finding myself explaining to a Frenchwoman what had been its original destination.

Although our stay in Paris in the summer of 1870 was of barely three weeks' duration it appeared much longer because of the many emotions experienced during that time. There was the ceaseless looking for news; the daily alternating rumors of victory and defeat; the former proving, alas! erroneous; and the latter invariably all too true. So intense was the interest, that we young people at least, were pleased at knowing we could not get passage home for some weeks to come. There was excitement everywhere, and I well remember driving one day to the Compagnie des Indes—that wonderful lace emporium—when our *fiacre* was stopped by the great shouting press of people, and a man mounting the carriage step, and leaning right in between us, shrieked aloud, "Grande Victoire! Grande Victoire!" I must confess that I stood up and screamed with the crowd myself! It was a

common thing to see and hear the great opera singers of that day, Madame Sass, Capoul, and others, stopped upon the Boulevards while they sang "Partant pour la Syrie," and other patriotic songs; which, after the battle of Sedan (September 1st), and the spreading of the knowledge that Bazaine and his army were bottled up in Metz, changed abruptly to the Marseillaise.

Strange as it may seem the Guignols (Punch and Judy shows) on the Champs Elysées did a thriving business during that time, and these we found to be regularly patronized by my brothers Edmund and Carlton—aged respectively five and two years—who, with their nurse, were to be found every afternoon at the time of opening, seated in the front row of one particular booth, where their merry laughter and the enchanted guffaws of their colored attendant attracted quite as much attention as did the antics of the *pupazzi*.

And all this time the French were suffering reverse after reverse, but not without making the Germans pay heavily for their victories.

On September 2nd, the French army being completely surrounded by the Germans, and having lost seventeen thousand in killed and wounded, surrendered, and Napoleon himself was taken prisoner. France no longer had an army; one had capitulated at Sedan; the other was locked up in Metz.

On the day following this disaster my father went into the banking house of Munroe & Co., and there Mr. Munroe, taking him aside, told him that he must immediately take his family out of Paris, else they would not be able to leave at all.

It was but a question of a few hours before we were on our way to Havre, and that in company with the wives and families of many of the officers of the U. S. European Squadron. We were among the last of the foreign population to leave, and Mrs. Little (mother of Ensign Wm. McCarthy Little), having for-



gotten to take her box of jewels from the bank, her son returned the following day to get it, and he declared it would indeed have been impossible for a large party to leave Paris later than we had done.

In Havre we had to wait many days before the sailing of the steamer *Ville de Paris*, on which our passage was engaged. The hotel at which we were staying was crowded with people fleeing like ourselves, from the French capital, and all waiting an opportunity to get across either to England or the United States.

Finally, after what would be considered today a somewhat lengthy crossing, we reached Morristown, N. J., where we found my grandfather recovering from the effects of a sunstroke, about which we had been cabled, though too late for the message to be received; and from where my father wrote, on September 24th, to Commodore James Alden:

“I have the honor to report my arrival at this place, in obedience to the Department’s orders of the 8th of August, 1870.

“Very resp’tfully, etc.”

## CHAPTER XXIV

### LAST YEARS

ALTHOUGH placed on the retired list on March 1st, 1870, Rear Admiral Radford had no sooner reported his arrival in the United States than he received an order to "proceed to Washington, D. C., by the 1st of October next, and report to Rear Admiral Jos. Smith, at the Department, for duty as Member of the Examining Board of which he is President."

For the following two years Radford served on different Naval Boards under the Presidency of Rear Admiral Jos. Smith, of Rear Admiral Theodore Bailey and of Vice Admiral Rowan, showing—as reads the record—that "his experience and knowledge were made use of many times by the Government."

We were all greatly pleased at finding ourselves again in Washington, and were shortly settled in a house on what is now Q Street, N.W., but which was then Stoddert Street, named for Benjamin Stoddert of Georgetown, first Secretary of the Navy. My father enjoyed being among his old friends once more, and many a hearty laugh would come from the smoking-room of an evening as they would sit there together over their cigars. General Grant, who was then President, would occasionally drop in for a smoke and chat.

In the autumn of 1871 my father made a visit to St. Louis, and the following letter from his brother, Mr. Jefferson Clark, was written after his return.



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*U. S. S. Wyoming*





Minoma, St. Louis Co., Nov. 19th, 1871.

" Dear Brother,

" I received yours of the 9th, and was glad to see that you had arrived safely in the bosom of your loving family, although I would have been more gratified if you could have remained with us longer—which I flatter myself would have been the case had not the momentary arrival of the Grand Duke Alexis hurried you back before your visit was half completed here. I wish I had you here now, for I have just heard of a most excellent new place to hunt geese, swan, ducks and grouse, and as for quail they say there is no end of them. And what is most important for me, now that I am growing old, is that there is a good house to live in about a half mile from the lake, and no pot hunters about. Can't you come back after this description and let Alexis slide on the briny deep? . . . We enjoyed your visit so much that we desire to see you now more than ever, and if you can't come yourself send on some other member of your family. I should like to see M. and S., and dear Sister Mary more than all if she could make it convenient to come.

" Your affectionate Bro.,

" J. K. Clark."

That my father's cordial relations with his cousin G. Wythe Munford were always kept up is shown by the following extracts from a letter.

" Richmond, Nov. 21, 1873.

" Dear William,

" Every now & then, when I am looking back at old times, memory brings back to me the pleasant scenes we have passed together & the kind friendship I have felt for you & yours. Over & over again have I wished we could be together as in our youthful days, & again in our prime, & I often think of the

time when you & your sweet bride, then in her bloom, came on to see us at Richmond, and I still hope we may have the pleasure of having you once more in my house at Richmond. . . .

"I write now simply to ask your favorable attention to my brother-in-law, Ben Tucker. Of course you know him. He is the same pleasant companion & gentleman he has always been. He will be in Washington . . . on behalf of the Messrs. Talbott, who have a large & extensive foundry & machine manufacturing establishment here. The activity in the Navy Yards of the United States has induced them to think that there may be contracts being let out for shot & shell, or for engines & machinery in their line, which they would be glad to obtain.

"Mr. Charles H. Talbott, one of the firm, married my daughter. This is the only personal interest I have in the matter . . . however, I have thought if the Government would give to the Southern people some of their contracts in these times, they would do more to restore good feeling than perhaps in any other way. Portsmouth & Gosport are feeling the spring from the little activity the Cuban excitement is occasioning, & a crumb or two to Richmond would be thankfully received.

"You know the ropes, the kind of men to approach, & how to manage these matters. Give Mr. Tucker a helping hand & put him in communication with the proper men. . . .

"Remember me affectionately to your wife, & believe me sincerely your cousin & friend,

"George W. Munford."

Another letter from the same to the same, dated, "Richmond, Jan. 11th, 1874," says: "I have been here for the last six months preparing for the State a new edition of the Code of Virginia, which has been just finished, & is now published. . . . I induced my wife to come up with me for a short time, leaving all the girls

down in Gloucester. . . .” He then mentions his daughters by name and concludes: “I name them all that you may know the number, & sympathize with me in the situation,—*ten daughters!*”

In addition to these there were four sons, the eldest of whom, General Thomas Munford, a leading citizen of Lynchburg—whose wife was a Miss Tayloe, of the well-known Washington family of that name—died during the year 1916.

Being, upon our return from Europe, not yet fully sixteen, I was busy for the two ensuing years with my studies, and, in 1873, “came out,” with a large circle of friends and acquaintances, in Washington Society. In the spring of 1874 I visited my relatives in St. Louis, and, coming East, via Niagara, in the early part of July, with my aunt Mrs. Kearny, and my cousin, Stephen Kearny, joined my father and sister at the White Sulphur Springs. There we spent a delightful month. My father, who was a favorite with both young and old, having always ready some amusing jest that would make him the life of any party, enjoying it as greatly as any of us. Among Washingtonians there that summer were Mr. Wm. Corcoran, with his little granddaughter Lulie Eustis, and her aunt Miss Eustis; and Mrs. Ogle Tayloe, who had with her her niece, Lily Price—later the Duchess of Marlborough.

In November of that year my sister married Mr. Randolph Coyle, Assistant District Attorney; and two years later we moved to a house my father had just built at 1736 N Street. There, in 1878, my own marriage with a member of the Russian Diplomatic Corps took place.

As this was the first Russian wedding that had occurred in Washington since that of the Russian Minister, Mr. Bodisco, and Miss Williams—(which was in 1837)—there was quite a little interest taken in the event.

The priest of the Russian church in New York was to come on to perform the ceremony at the house, after which the Episcopal service was to be held at the Church of the Ascension. It was at first proposed to have only the bridesmaids and groomsmen, beside the family and immediate relatives, present at the first ceremony, but Mrs. Hayes, the wife of the President, having intimated that she would be much pleased to attend, this program had to be slightly modified.

In 1882 my father purchased a summer residence in Barnstable, Mass.; and there were held yearly family gatherings in which, however, my husband and I, with our young son, did not long participate, as, at the end of the year 1883, we left the United States, and I saw my father only once again after that time. That was during the summer of 1886, when, leaving my husband and son in Berne, Switzerland, I came to this country and spent two months with my mother and father in Barnstable.

While I was there my father received a letter recalling a page of days long past, and proving the writer to be possessed of a wonderfully retentive memory. It was dated, "Cuthbert, Ga., Aug. 20th, '86," and was, in part, as follows:

"You will no doubt have concluded that I have passed away, like all of our brother midshipmen of the *Brandywine* 61 years ago.

"If I mistake not you and myself are the only survivors of all the officers that were attached to the *Brandywine*. I have often thought of you and the other midshipmen and I send a list of the officers so that you may know I am no adventurer. . . . My recollection is perfect as you will see by the list of officers I send, as I have no log-book to refer to. I have only met one or two of our shipmates in 50 years, Brent and Maury, yet I have not forgotten one. . . . I saw Capt. W. H. Hunter last Jan. 7th,



in N. O. he was attached to the *North Carolina* when we were in Minorca. I am in my 81st year. . . . Would be pleased to hear from you, and to learn if there are any other of the officers alive, and hoping I have not trespassed on your patience, I remain

“Your obt. Servt. and old Shipmate,

“Sol. D. Belton.”

Accompanying this was a list of the officers of the U. S. Frigate *Brandywine*, commencing with the name of Capt. Charles Morris, and including those of First Lieut. Francis H. Gregory, Lieut. David Farragut, and Midshipmen Richard Page, W. D. Porter, brother of Admiral D. D. Porter, Wm. Radford, etc., which is given in the chapter on La Fayette.

In Admiral Radford's answer to this letter we read:

“Your kind and agreeable letter of Aug. 20th, gave me much pleasure. . . . You are a little older than I am but your memory and vivacity have not in the least failed as you have shown by giving me the list of officers ‘from memory’ who sailed on the *Brandywine* when she took Gen. La Fayette back to France in 1825. Richard Page is still alive, and I am told he is as erect as ever. Admiral Farragut was one of the *Brandywine's* Lieutenants, and I think the greatest naval captain of his age.”

David Glasgow Farragut, the first Admiral of the United States Navy, was born in Tennessee, on July 5th, 1801. His father, George Farragut, was born on the island of Minorca, and came to America in 1776, where he was appointed sailing master in the Navy. He was stationed in New Orleans, and there in 1808, his beloved wife—Elizabeth Shine, of North Carolina—fell a victim to yellow fever. Her funeral occurred at the same time as that of Sailing Master David Porter, father of the celebrated Commodore Porter, who had been cared for in the Farraguts' home. “Not long after his father's death,” writes D. G. Farragut in his

memoirs, "Commander David Porter took command of the Naval Station at New Orleans and having heard that his father died at our house, and had received some attention from my parents, he determined to visit us and adopt such one of the children as desired to go with him. He accordingly came to see us, and . . . the question of adoption was put to us all, when I said promptly that I would go."

Farragut's appointment in the Navy bearing date December 17th, 1810, was received when he was a little more than nine years and five months old. In August, 1811, Porter took command of the *Essex*, and young Farragut accompanied him.

Great as was Farragut's native genius as a naval officer, he no doubt owed much to the opportunity which placed him at so early an age a midshipman on the *Essex*, under the vigilant and friendly eye that watched over his first professional training. He was but thirteen years old at the time of the fight, off the harbor of Valparaíso, between the *Essex* and two British ships-of-war, the *Phoebe* and the *Cherub*; and he so conducted himself during that bloody conflict that Porter wrote he "deserved the promotion for which he was too young to be recommended."

In January, 1825, Farragut was commissioned Lieutenant, and ordered to the *Brandywine*. Two years earlier he had married Miss Marchant, who died in 1840. In December, 1843, he married Miss Loyall, of Norfolk, Va. On the outbreak of the Civil War he was obliged to leave Norfolk, because of his loyalty. In January, 1862, he was given command of the Western Gulf Squadron, and sent against New Orleans.

On April 24th, he attacked and passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip with his fleet, and captured New Orleans.

On July 16th, he was commissioned Rear Admiral. March 14, 1863, he passed the batteries at Port Hudson. August 1st he sailed for New York, and in January, 1864, for the Gulf. On

August 5th, he attacked and passed the defenses of Mobile Bay, and conquered the Rebel Fleet. August 23rd he received surrender of Fort Morgan. December 23rd, was commissioned Vice Admiral. January 23rd, 1865, was ordered temporarily to James River. April 4th, he entered Richmond. July 25th, 1866, was commissioned Admiral. June 28th, 1867, he sailed from New York in the *Franklin* for a cruise in European waters. November 10th, 1868, reached New York. During the summer of 1869 he visited the Pacific Coast.

Admiral Farragut's last official duty was to take charge of the Naval obsequies of George Peabody, when the remains arrived at Portland in H.B.M ship *Monarch*, in January, 1870.

On August 14th, 1870, at the age of 69 he quietly passed away in Portsmouth; the remains were sent to New York and a public funeral held there on September 31st. Congress appropriated \$20,000 for the erection of a colossal bronze statue of Admiral Farragut, which stands in Farragut Square, Washington, D. C.

Another letter of Belton's dated, "Oct. 13th,/86," reads in part: "I see by the papers that one of Gen'l La Fayette's grandsons has been appointed by the French Government to visit New York and be present at the unveiling of the Statue of Liberty on the 28th, (if I mistake not). How I would like for you and Page and myself if we could be present and see him. We could tell him our names are inscribed on the Urn we presented his Grandfather, etc."

In the Navy Department records I find the following: "Solomon D. Belton, appointed midshipman Jan. 1st, 1825; resigned Feb. 16th, 1827."

In September, 1889, my son, then slightly under ten years of age, entered a Russian Cadet Corps in St. Petersburg; in which event my father took the deepest interest. That was the year when the "Russian Grippe," as it was called, made its first appearance,

and my boy was in the school infirmary with an attack of this when the Emperor Alexander III and the Empress Marie Feodorovna made a visit to this Corps. No date was ever set for the yearly visits which the Russian sovereigns habitually made to the different educational establishments in St. Petersburg, since their object was to ascertain exactly how they were conducted, and to witness the daily life of the scholars without any preparation having been made for their arrival.

After attending Divine Service in the chapel of the school, or cadet corps, if it were military, their Majesties would make a thorough inspection of the classrooms, dining-hall, and each and every part of the building. A copy of the official report of that visit was sent me at that time, and in it we read:

“Entering the infirmary followed by his suite, His Majesty approached the bed of a ten year old Cadet, Meissner, and commenced talking with him, asking: ‘who were his parents? Where was he born?’ and other questions; after which, turning to his suite, His Majesty called their attention to the manner in which this young boy spoke Russian; saying: ‘Born in the United States—of an American mother—coming to Russia only now to enter the service, and yet speaking Russian as though born and bred in this country! *This*, Gentlemen, is a lesson for those who tell me that Russian is too difficult a language for their children to learn.’”

It is a well known fact that the Emperor Alexander III made every endeavor to restore the use of the Russian language to the Court circles, where it was being greatly superseded by French.

Four months after the entry of his grandson into the “Nicholas Cadet Corps,” on January 8th, 1890, Rear Admiral Wm. Radford was taken from this world, leaving, as has been justly said: “A record of loyalty to his country only rivaled by that of his magnanimity toward those who conscientiously differed from him.”





U. S. Torpedo Boat Destroyer *Radford*  
Launched April 5, 1918



Rear Admiral Radford was a Charter member of the Metropolitan Club in Washington, when it had its quarters on the corner of Fifteenth and H streets, and afterwards in the old "Morris House," on H Street and Vermont Avenue. Elected a member of the Board of Governors of that Club on December 18th, 1875, he served in that capacity until December 13th, 1881. The Board at that time consisted of ten governors, among whom were also General Sherman and Admiral Porter.

His membership in the Military Order of the Loyal Legion dated from March 7th, 1866.

In closing, I find a tribute to his memory published shortly after his taking from this world, in the *Cape Cod Item*, which gives so just and accurate an estimate of his character that I feel I cannot do otherwise than insert it here.

"Rear Admiral William Radford, for several years past a summer resident of this village, which he always found very agreeable to his professional tastes and his health, died at his home in Washington, D. C. He will be missed sadly by many here who were privileged to enjoy his society and who found him in private life to be one of the most agreeable of gentlemen, and full of reminiscences touching the old Naval life of the Republic of which every intelligent American citizen should be proud.

"Cape Cod, so proud of her own seamen, salutes always with respect and honor all our great Captains who have helped maintain the honor of that Flag, under which, for a century or more the Cape seamen have been protected in their peaceable commerce and fisheries. Nowhere in the land will the death of such a man as Admiral Radford evoke a more sincere and immediate pang of regret than here. The bodies of our brave seamen and soldiers return indeed to the dust from whence they came, but they themselves make the land richer for their warlike honor which hence-

forth lives with the Flag which they served, and makes it richer for Patriotic homage.

"Yet it was not as a sailor, but as a man, that Admiral Radford always drew those who approached him close to him.

"A man of middle stature and size with a keen, incisive eye, fit to look through a man or a battle smoke, as if always ready to sight a gun; prompt in his opinions, and alert to assert them if need was; alive to all that concerned his Country or his friend, he was yet frank, cordial, simple, hospitable, sincere and gracious more than many of his eminency. With our regrets mingles our gratitude that this, our dear Friend, lived and wrought so well.

"A man who knew him briefly and yet was drawn to him most tenderly by his simple majesty of worth and honor, lays down this poor leaf of record at the gates of memory within which has disappeared so true and amiable a man as Admiral Radford."

Of Rear Admiral Radford's descendants three grandsons served with the United States forces during this country's participation in the Great World War.

Robert Armstrong Radford, Captain 21st Engineers, A. E. F. (son of S. K. Radford), served for nineteen months over seas.

William Radford Coyle, Major Marine Corps Reserve, was engaged in training men at Marine Training Station, Paris Island, S. C.

Major Randolph Coyle, U. S. M. C., commanded Marines U. S. S. *Wyoming*, British Grand Fleet, December, 1917, to December, 1918.

Rear Admiral Radford's grandson, Alexandre de Meissner, Cornet of the 44th Regiment of Dragoons of the Imperial Russian Army, is no longer in this world.



On April 5th, 1918, the torpedo boat destroyer *Radford*, named in honor of Rear Admiral Wm. Radford, was launched at the Newport News shipyards, and christened by Miss Mary Lovell Radford, granddaughter of the Admiral, assisted by her sister Miss Sophie A. Radford.

SOPHIE RADFORD DE MEISSNER.



## APPENDIX

General Butler's report of the action on the 24th and 25th Inst.

" Head-Quarters Department,  
" Virginia and North Carolina,  
" December 25th, 1864.

" Admiral,

" Upon landing the troops and making a thorough reconnoissance of Fort Fisher, both General Weitzel and myself are fully of the opinion that the place could not be carried by assault, as it was left substantially uninjured as a defensive work by the Navy fire. We found seventeen (17) guns, protected by traverses, two (2) only of which were dismounted, bearing up the beach and covering a strip of land, the only practicable route, not more than wide enough for a thousand men in line of battle. Having captured Flag Pond Hill Battery, the garrison of which sixty-five (65) men and two (2) commissioned officers were taken off by the Navy, we also captured Half Moon Battery and seven (7) officers and two hundred and eighteen (218) men of the Third N. C. Junior Reserves, including its commander, from whom I learned that a portion of Hoke's Division, consisting of Kirkland's and Haygood's Brigades, had been sent from the lines before Richmond on Tuesday last, arriving at Wilmington Friday night.

" General Weitzel advanced his skirmish line within fifty (50) yards of the fort, while the garrison was kept in their bomb-proofs by the fire of the Navy, and so closely that three (3) or four (4) men of the picket line ventured upon the parapet and through the sally-port of the work, capturing a horse, which they brought

off, killing the orderly who was the bearer of a despatch from the chief of artillery of General Whiting to bring a light battery within the fort, and also brought away from the parapet the flag of the fort.

“ This was done while the shells of the Navy were falling about the heads of the daring men who entered the work, and it was evident as soon as the fire of the Navy ceased because of the darkness, that the fort was fully manned again and opened with grape and canister upon our picket line.

“ Finding that nothing but the operations of a regular siege, which did not come within my instructions, would reduce the fort, and in view of the threatening aspect of the weather, wind arising from the south-east, rendering it impossible to make further landing through the surf I caused the troops, with their prisoners, to re-embark, and see nothing further that can be done by the land forces. I shall therefore sail for Hampton Roads as soon as the transport fleet can be got in order.

“ My engineers and officers report Fort Fisher to me as substantially uninjured as a defensive work.

“ I have the honor to be,

“ Very respectfully,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ Benj. F. Butler,

“ Major General Commanding.

“ To

“ Rear-Admiral Porter,

Comdg. N. A. Blockading Squadron.”



General Order,  
No. 75.

“ North Atlantic Squadron,  
“ Flag-Ship *Malvern*,  
“ December 30th, 1864.

“ As a question may arise (owing to the army authorities having concluded to re-embark) whether Fort Fisher was in a condition to resist an assault, I call upon the officers under my command to make me a report of the part they took in the actions of the 24th and 25th instants, and the damage apparently done to the works. General Butler assigns as a reason for not operating against Fort Fisher, that it was “ uninjured as a defensive work ”; which is a reflection on the skill of our gunners, and the officers who commanded them.

“ As a matter of history hereafter to be referred to, I wish not only to have from each commander the effect of our firing, but their impressions with regard to the defensibility of the fort, (battered as it was) against a combined attack of Army and Navy.

“ I myself am quite satisfied with the result of our share of the work, and could I have foreseen what happened, would have assaulted after dark with the sailors, and carried it at that.

“ David D. Porter,  
“ Rear-Admiral,  
“ Comd'g North Atlantic Squadron.”

" Report of the Action of the 24th & 25th Dec. 1864.

U. S. S. *New Ironsides*,

" (Anchored at Sea, "*Beaufort*," bearing N. N. West. distant about five (5) miles.)

" Sir,

" I have the honor to report, that in obedience to your orders, I took position, under the guns of "Fort Fisher," from Thirteen, to Fifteen Hundred yds. distant, or, as near, as the depth of water would permit. The Monitors *Canonicus*, *Monadnock*, and *Mahopac*, following the *New Ironsides* in. As soon as I anchored, I opened my Starboard Battery, and, continued a well directed fire for some five (5) hours, night coming on, I hauled off, in obedience to your orders. On the morning of the 25th, the Iron Clad Division again led in under the guns of "Fort Fisher," and took the position we occupied the day previous. The "*Saugus*," having arrived the night previous, took her station, and this Division, in connection with the others, drove the men from the guns in the Fort, they only firing one or two guns, and those at long intervals. All the Monitors were handled and fought well. Lieut. Commander Belknap took the inshore berth, and is reported to have dismounted one or more guns in the Fort. Judging from the immense number of shells which struck the Fort, it must have been considerably injured. Several guns were reported to have been dismounted. Two explosions took place, and three fires. The face of the Fort was very much plowed up by the shells from the Fleet. If the Fort was uninjured, (as a defensive work) no artillery known to modern warfare can do it. My impression is, that any considerable number of

troops could have stormed and taken the Fort immediately after the 2nd day's bombardment, with but little loss.

"All the Officers and men belonging to the "*New Ironsides*," served their guns and Country well, and I am greatly indebted to Lieut. Commander Phythian, the Executive Officer, for his energy and ability in getting the crew, and ship in such good fighting order.

"Very Respectfully,

"Your Obdt. Servt.,

"Wm. Radford,

"Com. Comdg. Iron Clad Div.

"Rear Admiral

"David D. Porter.

"Comdg. N. A. Squadron.

"Flagship *Malvern*."







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